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ABSTRACT

The CASASTART Field Guide is the result of 9 years of research, experience, and evaluation in cities where the program has enhanced the capacity of communities to serve high-risk youth through formal partnerships that reduce their use of drugs and alcohol and promote their positive development. The Field Guide is a practical "how to" manual on implementing this program in the community. The manual provides clear and concise instructions on how to build a successful collaboration; develop trusting relationships with youth and their families; deliver the eight service components of CASASTART to every participant; and obtain funding and recognition to sustain your program. Appendixes include: Fund Development Web sites and Current and Former CASASTART Funding Sources. (Contains 11 references.) (ADT)

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A FIELD GUIDE

# CASASTART

## A Proven Youth Development Strategy that Prevents Substance Abuse and Builds Communities

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# CASASTART

## FIELD GUIDE

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The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University

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It is my pleasure to introduce the **CASASTART Field Guide: A Proven Youth Development Strategy that Prevents Substance Abuse and Builds Communities.** The CASASTART Field Guide is the result of nine years of research, experience and evaluation in cities across the United States, where this program has enhanced the capacity of communities to serve high-risk youth through formal partnerships that reduce their use of drugs and alcohol and promote their positive development.

In 1992, The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University (CASA) created the program model for CASASTART and set this bold new program into motion. Our vision —then and now—is to target children who are at high risk for substance abuse, delinquency and academic failure. We harness the collective power, resources and expertise of a variety of partners: schools, law enforcement, social service and healthcare agencies, funding institutions, community residents and the families of the children at risk.

The Urban Institute conducted a rigorous evaluation of the model from 1992 to 1996. The findings demonstrate that CASASTART works. Compared to the randomly assigned control group, youth in the program were:

- Significantly less likely to use gateway and stronger drugs;
- Significantly less likely to report involvement in drug selling;
- Significantly more likely to be promoted to the next grade.

Youth also reported:

- Lower levels of violent offenses;
- Higher levels of positive peer influence;
- Lower levels of association with delinquent peers;
- Less susceptibility to negative peer pressure.

These results have led to designation of CASASTART as exemplary by the U.S. Department of Education's Expert Panel on Safe, Disciplined and Drug-Free Schools (2001). It has also been named a Promising Program by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Center for Substance Abuse and Prevention (2000), the Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence at the University of Colorado (2000) and by the U.S. Surgeon General (2001).

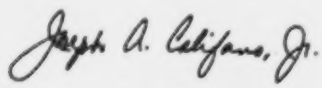
CASA is pleased to offer the CASASTART Field Guide, a practical how-to manual on implementing CASASTART in your community. In this guide, you will find clear and concise instructions on how to:

- Build a successful collaboration;
- Develop trusting relationships with youth and their families;
- Deliver the eight service components of CASASTART to every participant;
- Obtain funding and recognition to sustain your program.

CASA is proud to report on the success of CASASTART, which, as of February 2001, operates in 17 sites nationwide in urban and rural areas.

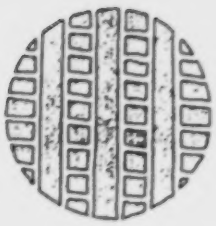
As you read and work with the material to follow, we are certain you will recognize the value of CASA's common sense approach to substance abuse prevention and youth development. CASASTART is an ambitious program that belongs in the hands of caring, dynamic individuals who will use it to transform the way they do business. As the program grows, CASASTART will continue to prove itself as an essential part of the solution all communities, schools, families and our nation's government are looking for as they strive to keep kids and communities safe and drug-free.

Thank you for your interest in CASASTART and for being part of the solution.



Joseph A. Califano, Jr.

# *How To Use This* FIELD GUIDE



# HOW TO USE THIS FIELD GUIDE

The **CASASTART Field Guide** is organized so that readers can find meaningful guidance throughout every stage of developing a CASASTART program. Feel free to read from beginning to end. Or use the section headings to search for specific information that applies to a question, dilemma or stage of the process in which you are currently engaged.

## PART ONE **Overview of CASASTART—**

This section describes the program model for CASASTART, the basic characteristics of a CASASTART site, how the collaboration works, who participates in the program, what participants get, and what CASA contributes as both a partner and guide in the process.

## PART TWO **How to Build a Successful Collaboration—**

This section describes how to conduct a community assessment, identify a leader/lead agency, identify potential partners, identify Advisory Council members, get buy-in from potential partners, set realistic goals, develop interagency agreements, engage additional partners, establish and honor confidentiality provisions, and begin multiple acts of communication between the partners and other stakeholders in the community.

## PART THREE **How to Work With Youth and Their Families—**

This section describes how to define youth eligibility to join CASASTART, develop a case management team, develop the case management process, conduct an intake and assessment interview with the child, draft an agreement with the child and family, make regular contact with the child, conduct an intake and assessment interview with the family, make regular contact with families and deliver the eight service components.

PART FOUR **How to Obtain Funds And Achieve Visibility to Sustain Your Program—**

This section describes how to use evaluation results to make the case for CASASTART, and how to identify sources of funding and create a media and marketing strategy. It also includes a description of the theoretical basis for CASASTART, which is likely to be requested when seeking grants.

PART FIVE **Resources and References—**

This section offers a map and grid of CASASTART sites and features instructions on how to create 17 forms and templates necessary to implementing CASASTART, including a sample budget and staffing pattern. Appendices A and B list Web sites that can be helpful in developing funds, and current and former funding sources for the program.

The guide features first-person accounts from individuals who have been involved in the program. Their experiences provide valuable insight and perspective on what has worked for partners and participants. For advice on how to address problems during start-up and implementation of the program, use the "Common Problems, Uncommon Solutions," segments throughout this guide, which incorporate lessons learned by staff at existing CASASTART sites.



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# *Overview of* CASASTART

# OVERVIEW OF CASASTART

## Program Model for CASASTART

The CASASTART program model is based on a dynamic and ongoing collaboration among three primary partner agencies working in a target community:

- A lead social service agency
- A school
- A local law enforcement agency

In this collaborative model, the goals and outcomes of the program, as well as the methods of achieving these outcomes, are shared equally among all partners in the collaboration. Partners contribute resources; participate in joint planning, implementation and evaluation; delegate and fulfill specific tasks within their own organizations; and act as co-equals with the lead agency.

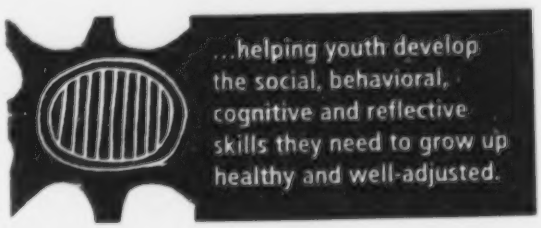
Collaboration through CASASTART creates new systems, redefines current modes of operation and transforms the overall structure of communications, accountability and program delivery among participating partners. In this way, CASASTART goes beyond a cooperative model, which only works to coordinate existing structures and supports among organizations, to a model that embodies a common purpose and method for goal achievement.

## The Basic Characteristics of a CASASTART Site

Each CASASTART site shares a basic set of characteristics that are based on an awareness of and commitment to helping youth develop the social, behavioral, cognitive and reflective skills they need to grow up healthy and well-adjusted.

All CASASTART sites:

- possess a strong and active community commitment to youth development;
- are managed by a strong and committed lead social service agency;
- rely on community or problem-oriented policing strategies;
- operate within a specifically defined geographic boundary;
- serve children ages eight to thirteen who attend selected schools in the designated area;
- use the school as a base of operations for service delivery and meetings;
- prioritize partner communication by hosting a fixed series of meetings that engage staff, community residents and other stakeholders at the case, administrative and advisory levels;
- work in partnership with CASA.


...helping youth develop the social, behavioral, cognitive and reflective skills they need to grow up healthy and well-adjusted.



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goals

## How the Collaboration Works

Partners assess their strengths and weaknesses and agree to make any internal changes required to achieve common goals. Each then fulfills its responsibilities to the collaboration according to terms expressed in an interagency agreement negotiated between the partners. Though the terms agreed upon by each partner vary, they all make a commitment to work in tandem with the others to transform the way youth, their families and, by extension, the rest of the community are served through the CASASTART collaboration.

Partners in a CASASTART collaboration together pursue **five fundamental goals:**

1. To prevent substance abuse by children receiving program services;
2. To prevent delinquency among children receiving program services;
3. To improve school performance and attendance among children receiving program services;
4. To develop collaborative working relationships between the service agencies, schools and law enforcement in order to meet the needs of youth and their families;
5. To improve communication between CASASTART participants and their families and cultivate the involvement of families with schools and social service agencies.

Partners' success in meeting these goals depends largely on the quality and clarity of the communications and relationships within the collaboration.

All CASASTART programs utilize three meeting forums—case conferences, administrative meetings and Advisory Council meetings—to ensure meaningful communication among all partners on a regular basis. These forums make it possible for direct service and administrative staff, members of the community and policy makers to sort out problems, share triumphs and move forward as a team. In addition, CASA convenes an annual all-site conference, hosts bimonthly conference calls and publishes a CASASTART newsletter quarterly.

Factors such as how often partners meet, how well partners negotiate conflicts and how accountable partners are to one another and to the terms of their partnership agreements, ultimately make—or break—this program. If the collaboration is working, participating youth and their families will be getting all that they need and more, and youth-serving organizations will be working differently, i.e., sharing information more freely, working outside of prescribed roles and standard schedules.

## Who Participates In CASASTART

Potentially eligible children are referred to CASASTART case managers by school or social services staff, the police or juvenile court personnel. Case managers determine whether children experience the degree of school, family and personal risk that make them prime candidates for program participation.

In order to participate in CASASTART, children must be ages eight to thirteen and display risk factors known to be strong indicators of later involvement with substance abuse, delinquency and academic failure.

CASASTART targets:

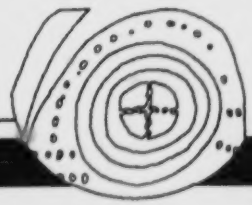
- Children with at least two of the following **school behavior and academic problems:** low grades, enrollment in a special education curriculum, held back a grade, chronic tardiness and/or truancy, disruptive behavior, and repeated out-of-school suspensions, detentions and frequent reports to the principal's office;
- Children with at least one of the following **family problems:** a history of family violence, abuse and neglect, family members involved with gangs, family members with a criminal conviction

in the past five years, and family members who use or deal drugs, engage in other criminal activities or who expose the child to damaging behaviors;

- Children with at least one of the following **personal problems:** a history of known or suspected drug use or dealing, past arrests or involvement in delinquent and destructive acts, gang membership, emotional disturbances or disorders, pregnancy and/or parenthood, and being a victim of abuse or neglect.

For every child enrolled in the program, CASASTART aims to:

- Improve attachments to prosocial individuals and institutions;
- Decrease bonds to deviant norms and groups;
- Increase opportunities to achieve positive goals;
- Decrease opportunities for exposure to negative experiences.



## Participating Child

I joined CASASTART because of the activities. We went river rafting, had a pizza party, went to an amusement park and visited Water World. I was thirteen and had some friends who were in the program already. That's how I knew it was going to be fun.

I used to be pretty hyper. I got in trouble for talking a lot in school. My life felt kind of boring, because I didn't get to do as many activities. I could play my video games or go to a friend's house. But **if I'm bored now, I come here. We do stuff or we talk about personal stuff. This is my second year in CASASTART. I'm happier.** I play football and basketball. I've made new friends. I come here every day of the week now and sometimes on the weekends. My youth leader, Bridget, comes to my house a lot, which is cool because she gets to see where I live. I show her my stuff. My mom likes her a lot.

I was nervous to start seventh grade this year because my first year of sixth grade I failed, and then my second year I did good. I guess I was afraid I'd fail again. But I'm already getting good grades. I don't want to be held back again, so if I get scared I'll talk to somebody. I feel I can talk to Bridget or Mike (my youth leader from before) about pretty much anything. When Mike left it was hard. But Bridget just said, "I'll try to do what he did for you." They both care for me. If I was in trouble, they would help me fix why I'm getting in trouble.

■ *Christopher*
**Denver, Colorado**

## Components of CASASTART

CASA created eight service components that direct the service delivery strategy of the collaboration. The components incorporate multiple prevention and intervention strategies as a means of addressing and helping youth and their families to cope with multiple risk factors and areas of need. All the participants receive all of the services by means of an individually tailored plan of service. All plans have specific goals, objectives and target dates for goal attainment upon which service success is measured. The specific plans are based on the needs and strengths of the youth and families identified during the initial assessment phase of the program.

NOTE: Assessment is an ongoing process throughout the life of the participants' involvement in CASASTART. Each case needs to be reviewed at the case conference no less than four times a year, even in the absence of perceived problems in the participant's service plan.

CASASTART participants make a commitment to be in the program for two years, and every child and family receives the following eight service components for the duration of their involvement:

1. **Social Support/Intensive Case Management**—The participating child and all the members of the child's family gain extensive support, counseling and crisis intervention through 24-hour access to a passionate, capable and committed case manager.

2. **Family Services**—Families of participating youth work with their case manager to identify goals and to access free counseling, job skills training, employment services, income and social support resources, and educational opportunities that lead to achieving those goals.

3. **Education Services**—Children attend regularly scheduled tutoring and homework assistance sessions to improve their performance in all academic subjects, with a special emphasis on increasing literacy and math skills.

4. **After-School and Summer Activities**—Children take part in recreational programs, trips, activities and special events after school and on weekends.

5. **Mentoring**—Children develop caring, trustful relationships with at least one adult outside their family.

6. **Incentives**—Children are motivated to strive for perfect attendance at school and in all tutoring, mentoring and recreational opportunities with incentives such as award ceremonies that celebrate their accomplishments, refreshments and modest stipends.

7. **Community Policing/Enhanced Enforcement**—The program strives to reduce substance abuse and related crime in CASASTART communities and to promote positive relationships between youth, their families and police officers. Law enforcement personnel who participate in the program make a commitment to community- and problem-oriented policing strategies. They may establish safe corridors along routes students take to and from school, serve as mentors, make substance abuse or law education presentations to the youth and take part in recreational and other leisuretime activities.

8. **Juvenile Justice Intervention**—Case managers establish ongoing relationships with juvenile court personnel to coordinate and monitor services for youth involved in the juvenile justice system.

## The Role of CASA in CASASTART

CASA is uniquely qualified to supervise and evaluate the CASASTART program. The mission of CASA is to inform Americans of the economic and social costs of substance abuse and its impact on their lives; assess what works in prevention, treatment and law enforcement; encourage every individual and institution to take responsibility to combat substance abuse and addiction; provide those on the front lines with the tools they need to succeed; and remove the stigma of abuse and replace shame and despair with hope.

Founded by former Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare Joseph A. Califano, Jr., CASA boasts a diverse, professional staff that includes epidemiologists, social scientists, educators, economists, health and policy researchers, social workers, psychologists, lawyers, statisticians and communications personnel. The staff of CASA is experienced in all aspects of program operation and evaluation, as well as in the substantive areas of substance abuse, education, youth services and the juvenile justice system.

CASA designed and directed the Children at Risk (CAR) program, a national research and demonstration project that was the basis for CASASTART. Both CAR and CASASTART are managed by CASA's Program Demonstration Division. This division also designed and manages Opportunities to Succeed, a program that helps formerly addicted felons transition home after a period of incarceration, and CASAWORKS for Families, a program that helps addicted mothers on public assistance get successful treatment and become self-sustaining.

CASA works with partners at CASASTART sites to coordinate ongoing evaluations of the program's impact. Reports based on the findings of these evaluations are disseminated widely to policy makers and through scholarly journals, popular media and professional conference presentations across the United States.

## CASA As Partner and Guide

CASA plays an active role in all phases of CASASTART program development and implementation. By making sure that all sites have the tools they need to make the program work, CASA prepares each site to meet high programmatic standards.

CASA contracts with sites during start-up and implementation of CASASTART to provide assistance and guidance in:

- identifying the target geographic neighborhood;
- negotiating among the partner agencies to solve problems and improve relations;
- establishing the CASASTART forums and identifying the stakeholders who need to be involved;
- facilitating case conferences, administrative meetings and Advisory Council meetings;
- cultivating ongoing relationships with media;
- convening annual CASASTART conferences;
- creating and distributing a quarterly CASASTART newsletter;
- scheduling and moderating quarterly conference calls involving CASASTART staff from throughout the country;
- refining the eligibility criteria for program participation;
- specifying the core services and ensuring that they are provided;
- providing the CASASTART Field Guide;
- training site staff in core program elements, among them case management, service integration and youth development strategies;
- developing and sustaining the collaborative relationships at the staff and policy levels;
- reviewing case records;
- supporting problem-oriented policing strategies in the neighborhood;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- developing strategies to work through issues of confidentiality;
- ensuring program fidelity and quality service delivery;
- assessing local funding needs and assisting in fund development;
- conducting qualitative and quantitative evaluation.

CASA has developed curricula for core CASASTART program components, including case management, service integration, collaboration, youth development frameworks, working effectively with families and assessing childrens' mental health needs. CASA staff and consultants deliver training to all CASASTART staff and personnel from other local agencies who are identified as integral to successful program implementation and who agree to be active in the program.

As a partner and advisor, CASA plays an important role in providing expert advice and facilitating the shared vision that extends beyond any one organization. This leads to improved outcomes for youth and new relationships among providers and families. In addition, the credibility that CASA brings as a national research organization and the informed and respectful way it approaches community partners have been cited by staff at CASASTART sites as essential to shaping and maintaining the collaboration. CASA's neutrality in communities plagued by tensions between community based agencies, schools and the police has also helped pave the way for reconciliation and compromise.

## Participating Parent

My daughter Rosie is a senior this year. She talks about college and about signing up for job corps. If it wasn't for the family center, I don't know if she would have made it this far—I don't know if I would have made it.

She joined when she was thirteen. Already, she'd been veering towards the wild side. I worried that she would drop out of school or that I would lose her to the street. But she found out about a trip to the Poconos that the family center was offering and signed up. I know she's glad she went. They gave her somebody to talk to. She knew they would steer her in the right direction.

**They made a difference in my life, too.** I got a job as a domestic violence counselor with a recommendation from the CASASTART case worker who had become a close friend. He asked for my resume, and a few days later I got called for an interview. I got the job and loved it. The feeling of satisfaction that came from pulling women and their kids out of the middle of a bad situation and sending them to a safe haven—there's no feeling like it. My goal now is to get a degree in social work so I can help people even more.

I consider myself pretty lucky when it comes to my kids. Looking at Rosie is like looking into the mirror. When I see her going the same way I did, I tell her, *"Where you're heading, I've already been."* She didn't want to listen to me before. But now I can talk to her. Her actions show that she respects herself and me more. She doesn't drink or mess with any drugs. This is what I wanted most for her, for all my kids. And I got it.

■ *Rosemary*
**Philadelphia, Pennsylvania**

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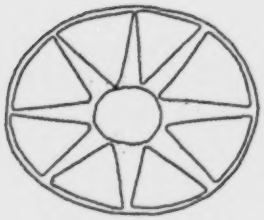
# *How To Build a* SUCCESSFUL COLLABORATION



# HOW TO BUILD A SUCCESSFUL COLLABORATION

This section describes how to develop the CASASTART program in a new site.

**PHASE I — INITIAL STEPS**

1. Conduct a community assessment
2. Identify a leader/lead agency
3. Identify potential partners
4. Identify Advisory Council members
5. Get buy-in from potential partners
6. Set realistic goals

**PHASE II — IMPLEMENTATION**

1. Develop interagency agreements
2. Engage additional partners as needed
3. Establish and honor confidentiality agreements
4. Begin multiple acts of communication using the CASASTART forums
5. Call on CASA to help shape and maintain the program

In CASASTART communities, the needs of the community outstrip the capacities of each agency alone to address these needs in any legitimate and lasting way. Only through successful, interagency partnerships that change fundamentally the way a community delivers services will CASASTART succeed.

The collaborative model of CASASTART demands that programmatic goals, outcomes, resources, staff, methods of implementation and evaluation, planning strategies, leadership and decision-making are shared among all partners—the lead agency, the school and the police. Partners unite around a central objective to develop processes that benefit children and families first.



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## Conduct a Community Assessment

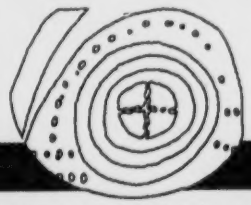
To identify a target community, neighborhood or area, you must look closely at the impact of drugs in the community, the degree of distress, the rates of crime and poverty and any feelings among residents that indicate a lack of safety or security.

**First, look at the community itself.**

- Review existing demographic, police and census data for the target community to identify neighborhoods that suffer from the greatest need and neglect. An easy way to do this is to check the Census Bureau Web site at **www.census.gov**. Other useful documents include Kids Count, published annually by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, local United Way reports, and school district and municipal planning reports.
- Which areas suffer the most from drug-related and/or gang-related crimes?
- Which schools are rated most poorly in terms of academic performance, attendance and/or safety?
- Which areas are untapped in terms of their potential for change and growth? In other words: Which area residents, school or police force has the most to gain from CASASTART?

**Conduct an inventory of the services and supports that exist within the community.**

- What resources are there to assist families and youth? Are there mental health, recreation and leisure outlets, libraries, employment opportunities or health facilities that are accessible to community/neighborhood residents? Are there organizations or collaborations within the community that have already demonstrated success? If the latter is true, consider linking the CASASTART collaboration to the ongoing effort.
- What are the community's most vital resources?
- Where are there gaps in services?
- Where are there relationships already established between agencies and individuals?
- What is the quality of those relationships?



### Building Partnerships

There's a six- to eight-month period of identifying and cultivating key people in the community who are solid, who are committed. You need someone to lead this process—a person with strong communications, interpersonal and organizational skills, someone who can work with diverse groups. Also, this person needs to have good analytical and critical thinking skills in order to make things work for a funding source.

During that first year, you're looking in your community for who is the most influential person affecting community policing strategies; who is the most influential person in the school district; who has power and has been in his or her position a year or two already? Which principal is going to pick up CASASTART and wrap his or her arms around it? The questions then become: Can the school person work with the police person? And, most important, which local community organization has the reputation to go into that school and that community and lead this project?

In our case, once we had assembled all our partners, it took time to fill in the gaps and figure out what we will do and what the partners will do. We're still working on compromises, and we're in year two. In order to do this program, you have to be realistic about what you can do. When people know up front what is required, the results are much better. You cannot rush.

■ *Gayle Warner, Director of Youth Programs* **Mi Casa Resource Center for Women, Inc.**
**Denver, Colorado**

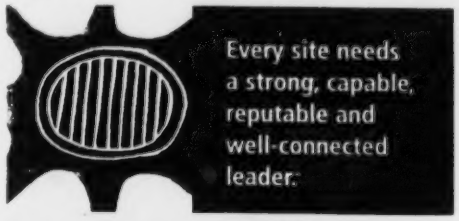
**Finally, ask: Is there anything in the community currently that speaks to its willingness and readiness to make changes and improvements** in service delivery where they are needed? Wherever this is true, that is the place to begin nurturing a CASASTART collaboration.

## Identify a Leader/Lead Agency

The process of assembling partners and building the structure to support CASASTART takes time, commitment, experience and skill. Every site needs a strong, capable, reputable and well-connected leader and/or agency to drive the process. This ensures that potential partners are hearing a consistent message about the program from the start, and leads to more consistency and clarity throughout the process.

The individual and/or agency who initiates the process of developing a CASASTART program must:

- **endorse the goals and affirm the values** of CASASTART: partnership, collaboration and its youth development strategy for preventing substance abuse;
- **identify and build relationships with key figures** in schools, law enforcement, social service agencies, juvenile court, and other city and state agencies that serve youth and families;
- **involve and engage people** whose **political and institutional connections** can benefit the collaboration by bringing in resources and high level support;
- **involve and engage people who live and work in the community** that is going to be served;
- **bring willing partners into contact with one another**, nurture connections among the group, create common ground, establish unity;
- **guide partners** in the process of improving their own organizational functioning so that each can work at their full capacity and potential;
- **cultivate active leadership** committed to system reform among partners;
- **foster an environment** where issues, conflicts and concerns can be aired and addressed head on;
- try to avoid the pitfalls of ego battles, turf wars and other "red herrings" but **develop good negotiation skills**;
- encourage leaders of partnering agencies to **communicate openly and directly** with their staffs, in particular, those whose day-to-day work and job descriptions will be affected by partnership;




- **oversee** the process of drafting an interagency agreement with each partner that clearly outlines goals, anticipates outcomes, roles and responsibilities, confidentiality provisions and conditions for sharing information, terms for renewing and terms for ending the partnership and other important elements.

## Identify Potential Partners

The CASASTART partnership centers around three main bodies: **the lead agency, the school and the police.** Finding and cultivating these partners is a critical part of the planning process. Partners will have to collaborate on all aspects of the program, and so, must remain open, flexible and firmly committed for the duration of their partnership. Partners must also be willing and able to develop trust, appreciate role differences and address conflict in a productive way. If the primary relationship between these three bodies is unworkable, the collaboration itself will not work.

This process will require several meetings among different levels of staff at several organizations. The following questions will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help you begin your search for potential partners:

- Which mid- to large-sized community based organization or municipal agency has established a solid reputation and/or has been a consistent presence in the community for several years?
- Which agency has a proven track record of working successfully with youth?
- Who is the most influential and informed person in the school district committed to positive youth development?
- Who is the most influential and informed person guiding policing strategy?
- If certain people and/or agencies have already expressed interest in joining a CASASTART collaboration, are they prepared to make a commitment of time and resources?

Approach potential partners with a clear purpose and agenda. Know what your goal is prior to that approach. For example:

- Get names of contacts who may be useful to building a collaboration.
- Learn more about partnerships that are already established in the community.
- Meet and determine *who* are the appropriate people to speak with about partnership.
- Pitch CASASTART to the person who has the power and influence to make this decision on behalf of his or her agency or institution.

## Identify Advisory Council Members

The process of identifying Advisory Council members is guided by a similar set of questions as those used to find partners. Unlike partners, Advisory Council members will not be involved in the day-to-day operations of your program. Their role is to lend credibility to your program in the public and private sectors, to foster support for the program within their spheres of influence and to provide guidance and help you generate long term sources of funding, political support, and media visibility.

Focus on seeking out and cultivating local leaders and decision-makers in business, family- and child-serving agencies, education, mental health, social services, politics and philanthropy who can assist or guide you in leveraging additional funding and support for your program. Depending on the kinds of connections you have and how your community works, you may find some members of your Advisory Council before you find your partners. These individuals can be extremely helpful in directing you to the police chief, school principal and social service agency director who will respond most favorably to a CASASTART collaboration.

As you conduct your search for partners and Advisory Council members, keep the following tips in mind:

- Make connections along the way into and throughout the ranks of an organization. These relationships can be extremely valuable to securing future buy-in and commitment from a potential partner.
- Move forward at all times. Spending a lot of time cultivating someone who does not ultimately have the power to decide these matters or is not really interested in joining will stall progress and can lead to setbacks and confusion.



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- Focus on building relationships with people who have the authority to commit staff, financial resources and facilities. Look for people who make budgetary and administrative decisions and who will use their influence to advance goals of a CASASTART collaboration. Pay attention to the names you hear repeatedly. Follow up on leads and use your sharpest instincts about whether the people you meet with seem ready, willing and capable to commit to a collaboration of this kind.
- Be clear and honest about your goals and objectives when sharing and seeking information.

## Get Buy-In From Potential Partners

In every community, social service agencies, schools and the police are already working on prevention and intervention strategies for dealing with very high risk youth—each in its own way. This existing commitment to youth, shared by each partner individually, provides the foundation for securing buy-in for a collaboration.

There is a limit to what any agency, school or police force can do alone to prevent substance abuse and delinquency and improve school performance among very high risk youth. Sharing the "burden" of this work is a compelling reason to join a collaboration. However, partners can only commit to sharing and doing the work involved in collaboration when they recognize and accept fully that the responsibilities are in proportion with—or outweighed by—the advantages. A commitment must also be made to create buy-in throughout the ranks after the agency has decided to go forward.

### Responsibilities of Becoming a CASASTART Partner

Use the following descriptions of the roles and responsibilities of each partner as a basis for your negotiations with all potential partners.

**The lead agency must be:**

a mid- to large-sized community based or community development organization, or a municipal agency or citywide collaborative that coordinates and provides services and support for youth; financially stable with good management capability and excellent follow-through; credible to colleagues and residents in the community; experienced in working with a population that displays multiple needs and risk factors; experienced in working as part of a collaboration.

**The lead agency will:**

assemble partners; nurture formal and informal communication among partners; hire, manage and train staff to implement the program; manage interagency relationships; maintain client records and data; coordinate sharing of information; secure funds to sustain the program; report to CASA, funding sources and the media on program outcomes; convene case conferences and administrative and Advisory Council meetings.

**The school will:**

provide office and meeting space; provide the structured environment for tutoring, after-school activities, mentoring and other services; refer students eligible for CASASTART; share information regarding participating students' grades, attendance and conduct; work with partners to meet goals of participating students' individualized service plans; participate in case conferences and administrative and Advisory Council meetings.

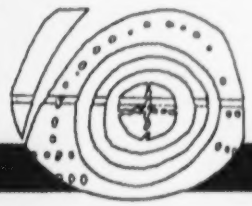
**The police will:**

create and/or enhance community policing strategies to make the target community safer; assign one or more police officers to increase police presence in the target community; establish safe corridors and/or safe walks to and from the school; make connections with youth in the program, possibly by sharing office space with CASASTART staff in the school, lead agency or in some central location within the community; refer youth eligible for CASASTART; accompany case managers on home visits when appropriate; interface with juvenile justice personnel; participate in case conferences, administrative meetings and Advisory Council meetings.

We approached a school that really needed a lot of help. It was an old school with a lot of students living in poverty and a principal who was willing to work with us. Their incentive to become a CASASTART partner was that they had so many problems. The building was falling apart. A young girl was raped in a school bathroom, and that news had just come out in the paper. It was graded as a "D" school.

The biggest hurdle has been the multitude of problems. Before we began negotiating a partnership, they had very few services at all and no wrap-around services. We were able to bring in the police department and much needed mental health services. They gave us office space so we could put a staff in the school. So we're there during school hours and after school and making home visits regularly.

We kept their after school programs going and brought in mentoring, entrepreneurial skills building and job training. We've been able to hire teachers to lead tutoring sessions in English, math, science and computers three mornings a week at the school. They send us the toughest kids they have.



Involving Schools

■ *Chloe Coney, President and CEO*
**Corporation to Develop Communities of Tampa**
**Tampa, Florida**



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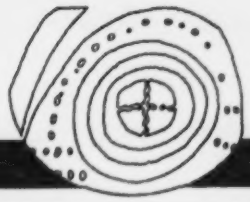

## Involving Police

One of the positive parts of CASASTART has been forming relationships with police officers in the community relations and juvenile divisions of the department. I joined the Community Police Advisory Board and have gained a sense of the issues that challenge the division. I keep them informed about issues in the school environment and interface for the community in several ways.

In order to make the partnership work, I have had to relinquish my need to have everyone look at the world through a social worker's lens. It is not reasonable to expect a cop to walk into a volatile situation and take off his cap to deal with an alcoholic father. But I know what steps I would like to take with a particular case, and there are times when I am going to say, "Don't arrest him—we need to work with him." We agree to step beyond our usual roles and demonstrate to the community and to the family that we are there as a team to help solve a problem.

Cops are pretty direct and that's refreshing. If they can do what you're asking, they'll say "yes" and then do it. If they can't, they won't. It can be difficult to get consensus, but the captain we work with is very supportive and the officer assigned to work on CASASTART has been great. He is consistent and has established his presence as a part of the team. He always responds in person to the community if there has been a recent incident—fights at the local bar, a shooting or evidence to suggest that heroin use is increasing in the area. He collects information and gives a follow-up report at our public safety meetings.

I called him when I was working with a young man who had stolen money from a case manager's purse. I wanted to make clear that there are real consequences for stealing, so I called this officer and said, "It would be helpful to me if you were there." I had called the boy's mother, too, to ask for her consent and participation. We strategized together about how to let the young man know that we were watching out for him, and we were also watching him. I think it did some good.

■ *Sara Jimenez McSweyn*
*Clinical Supervision/Program Coordination*
**El Centro Del Pueblo**
**Los Angeles, California**


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## Advantages of Becoming a CASASTART Partner

According to recent evaluations of the program's impact and effectiveness, **partners report numerous advantages to working within a CASASTART collaboration.** Use the results of this evaluation to make the case for partnership in CASASTART.

**Social service agencies described how CASASTART:**

- led to improved working relationships within their organizations;
- increased information exchange across agencies;
- demanded higher levels of professionalism among line and supervisory direct care staff;
- increased interagency referrals;
- fostered an atmosphere of freedom to speak out within an organization;
- served as a model program within their organizations;
- brought in more resources and engendered better coordination of resources.

**Schools described how CASASTART:**

- motivated community based agencies to become more involved in school related events such as parent nights and guidance conferences;
- cultivated more positive teacher attitudes toward difficult students.

**Police described how CASASTART:**

- afforded them the opportunity to establish their presence in the school and to build relationships not only with program participants but with the entire student body;
- reduced their own expectations about being able to "do it all";
- led to a shift in how they measure their effectiveness—from an emphasis on a high rate of arrests to lowered rates of victimization.

Partners also reported that focusing on the specific group of kids and their families provided them:

- an appreciation of how different perspectives contribute to a more complete view of the child and his or her strengths and problems;
- a better understanding of how to help youth and families succeed;
- a better perspective on how to work on other historically difficult issues experienced between these agencies.

In fact, partners stated that their skepticism about joining a collaboration diminished as they observed fellow partners demonstrating their commitment to the children participating, rather than to agency self-interest. They also noted that program participants were making significant gains in school and at home.

CASASTART operates through three main bodies: a lead agency, a school, and law enforcement.

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## Challenges of Becoming a CASASTART Partner

Be prepared, as well, to meet potential partners' resistance. Expect it. In doing so, you will learn about their previous experiences and present capacity to add something valuable to the collaboration.

Resistance to participating in CASASTART can arise for several reasons.

- Social service agencies that advocate for youth and families may have had negative experiences dealing with the police.
- Schools are likely to feel overwhelmed by existing demands or may view their mission as purely educational.
- Police who are used to working in isolation may resist the idea of sharing responsibilities, and reporting to others outside of law enforcement may be difficult for members of law enforcement agencies, where lines of authority are strictly adhered to.
- Any one or all three of these organizations may have little faith that any program can succeed in engaging youth who have so many problems and needs.

Often, partners' reasons for refraining from participation are related to previous negative experiences of collaboration where the roles were not clearly defined, too much was expected of them, certain agencies "used" the collaboration to pursue their own self-interest, too little was expected of them or their time and contributions were not valued.

These are all valid reasons for avoiding a collaboration. However, CASASTART—by definition—demands high standards of participation, carefully defined roles, communication and follow-through from all partners equally.

For some partners, the reasons to avoid collaboration are more practical. For instance:

- Social service agencies that do not have the staff, skills and expertise to coordinate meetings and correspondence with many partners, or that experience a high degree of staff turnover will not be able to sustain this program.
- Police officers who do not have the flexibility to work on a specialized program or who cannot be called outside of their shift will not be able to fulfill their commitment to the program.
- Case managers who are used to doing 50-minute counseling sessions in an office may not be able to adapt to a program that encourages client-driven solutions, home visits, and offers round-the-clock availability to children and their families.

It is also important to acknowledge that the individual guiding missions of the partner agencies are different. A goal of CASASTART is to define a common mission for the partnership, one that centers on the program participants by making the school and community better able to support their successful development.

As you engage with potential partners, be informed about the advantages, emphasize the benefits, but do not shy away from potential partners' resistance. Meet each point of opposition, concern or conflict with a clear head and an open mind. This builds trust and lets both of you know what you're getting into. A partner's buy-in must be genuine and is worth the wait. Without true buy-in, the partnership will falter and possibly fail.

## Set Realistic Goals

The start-up phase for CASASTART will vary from community to community. Most sites report that they spent the first six to eight months on relationship-building and securing healthy partnerships. Those who report having spent less than this amount of time on relationship-building also report wishing they had spent more.

CASA developed the following timeline to give some perspective on the work of most start-up operations during the first two years.

### First-year goals:

- Develop the process
- Get partners to the table
- Keep partners at the table
- Identify eligibility criteria for youth
- Develop resources and initial funding
- Sustain funding
- Decide funding allocation among the partners
- Build the Advisory Council
- Develop interagency agreements
- Hire staff
- Train staff from all agencies in core program elements
- Implement direct services to youth and families

### Second-year goals:

- Internalize the CASASTART communication process
- Identify and work on problems
- Refine the communication process
- Secure ongoing financial support
- Establish relationships with political representatives and the media

CASASTART grows from the ground up: Youth and their families will be served only when the process, partners and initial funds are firmly in place.



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## Develop the Interagency Agreements

The interagency agreement is a memorandum of understanding between the lead agency and each partner agency outlining roles and responsibilities, intervals for completing the work of the agreement, and terms for ending, revising or renewing the contract. Each partner is expected to honor its agreement for the duration of the partnership. By discussing needs and expectations at the outset, partners enter the collaborative relationship aware of their own and other partners' strengths, limitations and responsibilities.

### Bring Partners To the Table

Once you have assembled willing and capable partners—and before you draft your interagency agreements—you must together clarify goals and objectives, air all concerns and determine the shared and separate responsibilities of each partner. A process of self and partner assessment will cultivate a unified view of partnership in CASASTART and offer a realistic account of what partners can accomplish within a designated time frame.

Use the following questions to initiate a productive and continuing dialogue among all partners:

- What brings you to the table?
- What do you want to accomplish through partnership in CASASTART?
- What do you have to lose?
- What do you have to gain?
- What needs and pressures do you currently face?
- What are your concerns regarding this program model and/or the demands of partnership?
- How will you engage your staff in this partnership—in particular, how will you get buy-in from staff whose day-to-day jobs are affected by partnership?
- Whom do you report to in your agency or institution and how will you secure and sustain their support for the demands of partnership?
- What are your in-house rules, terminology, procedures and governing policies regarding confidentiality, record-keeping, reporting, service delivery, etc.?
- In what ways do your methods conflict with those of other partners in CASASTART?
- In what areas are compromises or trade-offs necessary?
- Who will pay for what aspect of running this program?
- What opportunities do you see on the horizon?

Once the lead agency, school and police have acknowledged the roles that each partner will play, and each understands the extent and the limits of their responsibilities to the collaboration, you are ready to draft interagency agreements.

Success in creating clear, reasonable and binding interagency agreements depends on every partner's willingness to ask and provide concrete answers to these questions—for their own benefit and for the benefit of the collaboration.

### Set Specific Expectations

Expectations must be consistent and agreed upon by all partners. Be clear and direct about your needs and expectations. For example:

- You may decide you need a room in the school that can house three people.
- You may have drafted a meeting schedule for the first year and have already determined who needs to be there and when.

Make these needs and demands known, agree to the terms, and then write them into the contract.

The interagency agreement must specify:

- Purpose and scope of the agreement;
- Effective date of the agreement;
- Definition of key terms;
- Implementation plan;
- Periodic communication at the highest administrative level;
- Written and unwritten communications methods;
- Meeting schedule;
- Confidentiality provisions (see page 21, "Establish and Honor Confidentiality Provisions");
- Anticipated outcomes;
- Allocation and/or sharing of resources, including: staff time, office space, meeting space and money;
- A statement to the effect that each partner is responsible for measuring, monitoring and meeting objectives of the collaboration;
- A time frame within which partners will complete their work;
- Terms for changing or modifying the contract;
- Reporting requirements;
- An agreed-upon conflict resolution process.

## Engage Additional Partners

When you have secured participation from the lead agency, school and police, you will be in an excellent position to branch out to other partners. Partnerships with other social service agencies, mental health professionals, religious groups, local businesses and colleges or universities are necessary to fulfilling the eight service components. Apply the same methods as those described in previous pages as you expand your capacity as a CASASTART program site.

## TIPS on drafting interagency agreements:

- ✔ **Begin with short term goals** that are realistic and attainable over a period of six or eight months. Use smaller accomplishments to create momentum for longer term or more challenging goals.
- ✔ Do not assume partners understand what is expected of them.
- ✔ Do not assume that partners will do work they have not been asked to do and have not specifically agreed to do.
- ✔ Do not underplay the requirements of the program and collaboration.
- ✔ Do not "talk people out of" their concerns or objections. Use conflicts as they arise to design partnerships that meet the needs of the collaboration and the needs of the individual agencies.
- ✔ Be steadfast about what you know will or won't work in your community. Begin with what you've got; consider what you need. Start with these basic strengths and needs and return to them as often as necessary to achieve clarity about goals and plans for implementation.

## Establish and Honor Confidentiality Provisions

The rationale for confidentiality provisions is to prevent the improper dissemination of information about children and families. They also protect personal security and privacy, protect families from the likelihood of discrimination and personal embarrassment, protect job security, reduce the likelihood of prejudice and differential treatment and encourage individuals to make use of services designed to help them.

Sharing information is also necessary and valuable in any CASASTART program, and allows CASASTART staff to conduct comprehensive assessments of youth and families' needs, provide necessary services to clients, coordinate service plans to avoid duplication of services and facilitate the monitoring of services to ensure that services are being provided and that agencies receive proper reimbursement. Sharing information serves the needs of the broader community by promoting public safety and enables CASASTART staff to make services more family focused.

### Follow these steps as you establish and honor confidentiality provisions for your program:

Find out about the federal and state statutes, state laws and regulations, statutory privileges and ethical standards that apply to confidentiality within the context of a CASASTART program. If the provisions in your state authorize that interagency agreements can set their own rules for sharing, what are the limitations? If the provisions in your state allow for agencies to disclose information that is relevant to treatment and necessary to preventing harm, who or what determines what is "relevant" and "harmful"?

### Work together with partners to establish provisions by considering the following questions:

- ❑ What is confidential?
- ❑ What are the exceptions?
- ❑ What are CASASTART staff authorized to share, with whom and under what conditions?
- ❑ What information can be shared with consent?
- ❑ What are your or another partner's reasons for wanting the information?
- ❑ What are the reasons for sharing the information?
- ❑ What are the benefits and risks to the client (youth and/or the family)?
- ❑ What are benefits and risks to the collaboration?
- ❑ What are the requirements for release and consent?
- ❑ Who gives consent for minors?

Draft an informed consent agreement with the client and with your partners based on answers to the above questions. Informed consent requires that the client agree in advance to the kinds of information that will be disclosed, to whom, when child protective services must be alerted, and for what purpose. Before signing an informed consent agreement, the client must understand the risks, benefits and his or her rights with regard to confidentiality. The client must also be capable of making a reasoned choice between alternatives in a language he or she can read and understand. (See pages 70 and 72 in "Resources and References" for more detailed information on how to create these forms.)

# The Casastart Forums

### Case Conferences: CASASTART Staff

***What is the purpose?***

To present new students in the program and to review progress of students already enrolled to discuss progress, problems and plans for supporting each child.

***When do they occur?***

At least once every two weeks.

***Where do they occur?***

In the school or other appropriate meeting space.

***Who attends?***

Case management staff,

School personnel (guidance counselor or social worker),

Police officer/s,

Parents or caregivers of participating youth,

CASA representative/ site coordinator.

### Administrative Meetings

***What is the purpose?***

To identify and resolve problems serving children and families that cannot be resolved by front-line staff because they involve the larger agency policy or practice issues.

***When do they occur?***

Quarterly.

***Where do they occur?***

In the school or other appropriate meeting space.

***Who attends?***

Executive director of the lead agency*,

School principal,

Police commander,

CASA representative/site coordinator.

* The executive director of the lead agency leads this meeting.

### Advisory Council Meetings

***What is the purpose?***

To link CASASTART with decision makers in the political, public, philanthropic and private sectors; to review progress of youth, families and interagency service delivery systems; to identify sources of funding so that the program can be sustained after the initial grant period; to assess the practicality of expanding CASASTART to other areas in the county, city or community.

***When do they occur?***

Quarterly.

***Where do they occur?***

In the school or other appropriate meeting space.

***Who attends?***

Advisory Council members,

CASA representative/site coordinator.

## Begin Multiple Acts of Communication

Successful collaboration hinges on open, direct and frequent communication between partners. "Multiple acts of communication" ensure contact on a daily basis as well as long term. Repeated contacts among partner agencies are essential to guiding the process of setting and achieving realistic goals, maintaining clear expectations, troubleshooting problems as they occur and continuing to build productive relationships.

### CASASTART Forums

CASASTART forums are meeting arrangements that maintain the flow of information and ensure that written and oral correspondence reaches and engages partners at all levels and across the board. The forums were designed to channel a steady flow of

In addition, CASA staff arrange and facilitate three other communications activities.

## National Conferences

***What is the purpose?***

To bring key leaders and staff from CASA and CASASTART program sites together to share ideas, experiences and successes; to address problems and concerns; to acquire new skills for implementing the program at sites nationwide.

***When do they occur?***

Annually.

***Where do they occur?***

In a city where a CASASTART site operates.

***Who attends?***

CASA leadership, staff, council members, colleagues and guests; CASASTART staff, representatives from partner agencies, Advisory Council members from throughout the national network of program sites and funders.

## Conference Calls

***What is the purpose?***

To establish and maintain regular contact; to share specific ideas, experiences, successes and challenges.

***When do they occur?***

Bimonthly.

***Where do they occur?***

Calls are convened and moderated by CASA staff. Calls originate from each site when they dial into a central CASA "800" number.

***Who attends?***

Lead agency program coordinators,

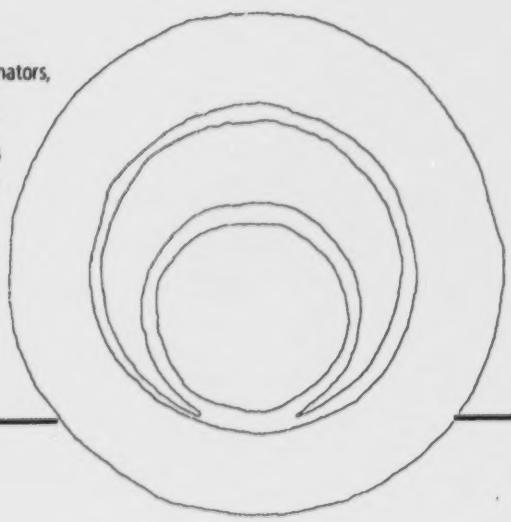
CASA staff/site coordinators,

Police and/or school partners participate in calls from time to time.

## Newsletter

CASA publishes a quarterly CASASTART newsletter. It is sent to partners and locally identified constituents in each site, state and federal officials, selected media and current or potential funding sources.

The newsletter features local site news, CASA events, information relevant to the work of CASASTART, and funding opportunities and tips.



information between and among partners, Advisory Council members and staff at CASA. Forums promote consistent delivery and implementation and provide a reliable structure for doing the work of partnership and collaboration.

Use the table to create and sustain these forums as you begin your program.

## Common Problems, Uncommon Solutions

Please use this section to find ideas for confronting similar situations in your program.

**CASASTART has encountered certain recurring problems in the area of building a collaboration.**

**Common Problem:** One of the partners is holding out, slowing me down.

**Uncommon Solution:** Remain in contact with the resistant partner, but focus your best energies on building and formalizing your relationships with other partners. As you experience success with other willing partners, the less-willing partner will see that the collaboration is real, viable and gaining momentum. This individual and/or agency is much more likely to see CASASTART as an opportunity they don't want to pass up.

**Common Problem:** Middle- to lower-level staff at partner agency feel compelled to participate by "higher-ups"; they resent the changes in their job descriptions and want to be paid more.

**Uncommon Solution:** Facilitate meetings where staff can describe additional responsibilities, articulate problems and offer suggestions for improving their circumstances. Give full consideration to their viewpoints, validate concerns and meet any demands that you can afford to meet. Revisit the issue of getting "buy-in" from partners. In what ways can staff job descriptions be altered to make room for new responsibilities? In what ways can the partner agency provide additional compensation—financially or in the form of benefits—that would be agreeable to staff? If the situation is untenable, consider whether the partner is fully committed to securing buy-in within its organization and whether the staff is up to the task of completing the agreed-upon work.

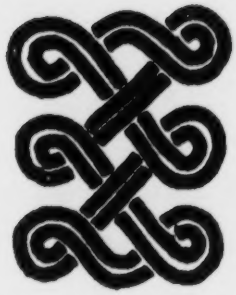
**Common Problem:** Partners come to the table thinking that they will do their jobs the way they've always done them—only now, with partners.

**Uncommon Solution:** By clearly and directly articulating the goals and responsibilities of partnership from the beginning, you can avoid confusion later on. Create an atmosphere among partners that fosters open communication so that people can voice their complaints, concerns, disagreements and disapproval—as well as their agreements and approval. Review how all partners are doing. Forums should include the opportunity to make creative adjustments to how the work is performed. Make it easy for partners to share successes while helping each other to devise new approaches. The process of drafting interagency agreements should serve as the last stop for partners who do not yet understand or accept the responsibilities of a CASASTART collaboration.

**Common Problem:** Lead agency is doing too much; partners are not meeting expectations.

**Uncommon Solution:** In CASASTART, the lead agency is first among equals. All partners have a vested interest and a financial stake, and all are bound by interagency agreements. Use CASASTART forums—case conferences, administrative meetings and Advisory Council meetings—to get help in dealing with difficult issues. First and foremost: Do not hold onto your problem. CASA is a built-in mechanism for assistance and technical support. Use the resources and support available to you.

# *How To Work with* YOUTH & THEIR FAMILIES



# HOW TO WORK WITH YOUTH AND THEIR FAMILIES

This section describes how to:

1. **Define youth eligibility to join CASASTART**
2. **Develop a case management team**
3. **Develop the case management process**
4. **Conduct an intake and assessment interview with the child**
5. **Draft an agreement with the child and family**
6. **Make regular contact with the child**
7. **Conduct an intake and assessment interview with the family**
8. **Deliver the eight service components**
9. **Make regular contact with families**

CASASTART approaches youth and families with respect, focusing on strengths that exist within the child and within all members of the family. It is a case manager's job to build on these strengths.

By agreeing to join, participating children and families demonstrate that they are willing to take steps to bring more security and stability to their lives. Case managers provide substantial encouragement and support for a client's efforts toward greater self-reliance. Youth and families participate in the assessment process and work closely with the case manager to create plans for achieving short and long term goals. During this process, a CASASTART case manager becomes someone to lean on as well as someone to lean away from, in the direction of increased independence.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## 1 Define Youth Eligibility To Join CASASTART

CASASTART targets children ages eight to thirteen. Eligible children must be enrolled as students at the partner school and display the following multiple risk factors:

**School behavior and academic problems**
*(at least two of the following):*

- low grades
- enrollment in special education curriculum
- held back a grade
- chronic tardiness and/or truancy
- disruptive behavior and repeated out-of-school suspensions
- detentions and frequent reports to the principal's, assistant principal's or dean's office

**Family problems and problems at home**
*(at least one of the following):*

- a history of family violence, abuse and neglect
- family members involved with gangs
- family members with a criminal conviction in the past five years
- family members who use or deal drugs, engage in other criminal activities or who expose the child to damaging behaviors
- extreme poverty and/or substandard living conditions

**Personal problems**
*(at least one of the following):*

- a history of known or suspected drug use or dealing, past arrests or involvement in delinquent and destructive acts
- gang membership
- emotional disturbances or disorders
- being a victim of abuse, neglect and maltreatment
- sexually precocious behavior
- pregnancy and/or parenthood

The risk factors point to a lack of connection between the child and mainstream social institutions such as family, friends, school and community organizations. CASASTART recognizes that these ties are a critical part of a child's healthy development, and they are key to preventing early experimentation with drugs or other destructive behavior from turning into an addiction.

CASASTART staff identify eligible children through referrals from school, law enforcement, juvenile court and case management personnel. Each CASASTART program focuses on fifteen to eighteen youth and their families at a time. Each child participates in the program for as long as two years.

## 2 Develop a Case Management Team

To begin identifying and working with youth and their families, the lead agency must hire, train and develop a case management team. CASASTART case managers aim to:

- maximize clients' potential to meet environmental challenges,
- maximize the caring capacity of families,
- maximize the ability of formal systems of care to meet the needs of individuals and groups, and
- increase families' access to needed services.

A case manager may go by different titles at different sites, depending on the language and focus preferred by the lead agency, partners and funding institutions. Terms such as, youth advocate, family advocate, case worker, social worker, youth leader and case specialist all may be used to describe a professional case manager.

## CASASTART Case Manager: Job Description

The CASASTART case manager must be a highly responsible individual willing to perform intensive case management functions for fifteen to eighteen youth and their families, including intake interviews, home visits, needs assessments, service plans, crisis intervention, referrals, follow-up, documentation and evaluation. A case manager may bring a masters or baccalaureate degree and can expect to work approximately 40 hours per week, though not necessarily during the hours from 9am to 5pm, Monday through Friday.

**The CASASTART Case Manager** will:

- design and implement individualized youth development strategies to ensure that prescribed support services are provided to students defined as very high risk and their families in a logical, timely and effective manner;
- develop and maintain mutually respectful long term relationships with families;
- identify resources and establish a referral system within and among community agencies designed to support youth and families;
- identify and work with families' social supports, including faith-based organizations, neighborhood block associations, tenant groups, community centers and clubs;
- conduct case management meetings regularly with parents and key personnel from the school, law enforcement, lead agency and CASA to discuss progress toward goals and to modify service plans as needed;
- maintain all required documentation such as family income, previous and current services provided, progress notes, referrals, assessment and follow-up for review;
- prepare and submit monthly and quarterly statistics, narrative and activity reports;
- conduct community outreach by planning and executing social and educational events and outings;
- make visits to the homes of participating families a minimum of once a month;

## Begin the Case Management Process 3

Once a child is referred to CASASTART, the case manager schedules a home visit and conducts two separate intake interviews. Both must be completed ***within thirty days*** after the initial referral. The interviews—one with the family, usually represented by the head of the household, and one with the child—are necessary for the initial assessment of a child and family's situation, strengths, needs and intentions for joining the CASASTART program. It is vital to have any required consent forms signed by the parent prior to the child and family meeting with the case manager.

In order to create a realistic and meaningful service plan—one that is designed to address specific needs and wants as defined by the child and family—assessment must be thorough and as accurate as possible. A comprehensive assessment should include data from:

- the person who made the referral (school, law enforcement, court personnel);
- the child;
- the family (usually the head of the household);
- any other professionals who have been or are currently involved in the child's life;
- other key figures in the child's life, family members or friends of the family.

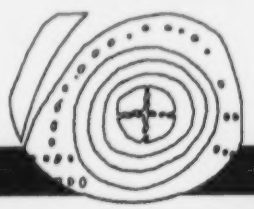
## Conduct an Intake and Assessment Interview With the Child 4

The intake and assessment interview is the first opportunity for the case manager to establish trust with the family and to introduce CASASTART as a voluntary program through which the participating child and the family can access resources and support to meet their own educational, social, financial and recreational goals.

The goal of a good assessment is to develop a basic understanding of the academic, emotional, financial and social needs of the child and family, as well as a strong sense of what resources the family has to draw from. The following questionnaire templates for child and family provide a solid foundation from which to build an assessment, diagnosis and service plan.

CASA doesn't promulgate any particular intake format. Feel free to adapt your own agency's assessment materials for the purposes of gathering answers to the questions included in the following templates.

Case managers should interview the child at home or in some other location where the child is likely to feel comfortable, safe and free to speak openly about experiences. The interview will take approximately one hour with both the child and parent. The more sensitive questions (i.e. sexual behavior, mental health, history of alcohol and drug use) may be explored subsequent to the first meeting when a deeper level of trust has been established.



### Case Manager

I have been working with youth for more than 12 years—starting back in my country, the Congo, and in Spain and South America. The conditions I see here in Philadelphia are not that different from in my country.

As a case manager for CASASTART, I was really involved in my clients' lives—not just talking to them, but caring about them. There were times I would spend hours and hours trying to find a solution for a family that was living in conditions I cannot describe. I believed that there must be a better life for this family and if I help the mother and father, they can help the child.

One time, a family was involved in a serious car accident—the mom and three children. Two of the children were in my program. The accident happened at two o'clock in the morning, and the first person they called was me. I spent the next three days at the hospital only being there with the family. Their mom was in a coma for more than a month. After the first three days, I was spending two hours a day there. When she opened her eyes, she said, "Is this Peta? Where are my children?" I said, "I called your brother who is taking care of them now. They are fine and asking about you and will come to visit you now that you are awake." She said, "Thank you for being there."

Right now, I see that they are doing well. The oldest daughter is in high school. The two younger girls in middle school are not involved in any program—which is good. It means they are getting what they need on their own. The kids are still calling me and that's also a good sign.

**Any family you approach with this program will want to know: Is this just another case worker or is this someone who can connect with me?** First they may see you as "another one who's just looking for numbers, who wants to get into my family's business." But if you connect with them where they are and give them some answers to their problems, their view of you will change. **The most important thing is that approach, the attitude you bring to them.** Even being from another cultural background, it was amazing how people responded to me once they knew I cared and could meet them on their terms.

*Peta Ikambana, Youth Services Intervention Programs Manager*
**Congreso de Latinos Unidos, Inc. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania**

# Child Intake and Assessment Questionnaire

Be sure to get the child's name, date of birth, age, gender, date of referral, name of person who referred, date of interview, address, contact information and cultural background, race or ethnicity.

**Italicized text may be useful to you as a script for introducing segments of the interview in a way that builds trust with the client. Feel free to introduce and ask questions in your own style. The questions presented do not all have to be used by every CASASTART program. They do, however, represent the range of inquiry that will likely become pertinent over time in the program.**

*These questions are designed so that I can get a good idea about how things are for you at school and at home. The more I know about you, the more I can help you get what you want over the next two years. Your participation in CASASTART will be more fun and worthwhile if you answer truthfully. There are no grades and no measure of doing well or poorly on these questions.* ***Generally, your truthful answers will not lead to punishment of any kind. However, we have to report it if you tell us that you're thinking of hurting yourself or someone else. We also have to report it if someone is hurting you.*** *If you do not feel comfortable answering certain questions now, you can say so. We will come back to them later. Or you can let me know if there is a way we can talk about certain things that would feel more comfortable for you.*

It is helpful to begin with a general question, such as:

*Can you tell me a little about yourself and some of the things you like to do?*

## SCHOOL

*The first series of questions are about school.*

- ✔ Do you know what has brought you to CASASTART? If so, how would you describe the reasons?
- ✔ Do you have any questions about CASASTART right now?
- ✔ How many days a week do you go to school (on average or usually)?
- ✔ What classes do you think are the hardest, and why?
- ✔ What classes do you like or think are the easiest, and why?
- ✔ Have you ever been sent to the principal's, assistant principal's or dean's office? If so, how often would you say this happens?
- ✔ Have you ever been in a special education or inclusion class? If so, how often or for how long?
- ✔ Do you regularly participate in any kinds of clubs or activities after school?
- ✔ Do you participate in school activities, such as a school newspaper, student government or other groups that meet regularly? If so, what are they?
- ✔ Are there any activities at your school that you would like to get involved in?

*I am going to read some statements about school. For each one, I want you to tell me if the statement I read is true for you in the past 12 months—did it happen, does it happen, does it feel right to you? If it is not true or doesn't feel right, you can just say "no" or "false," and I'll move on to the next one. Your truthful answers will not lead to punishment of any kind.*

- ✔ You usually enjoyed school.
- ✔ You liked most of your teachers.
- ✔ You received good grades.
- ✔ You changed schools.
- ✔ You received awards from school for achievements in sports, academics or school-related activities.
- ✔ You discovered that you liked certain subjects in school.
- ✔ You received low grades.
- ✔ You had problems at school.
- ✔ You were expelled from school.
- ✔ You were suspended from school.
- ✔ You carried a weapon to school. If this is true, what type of weapon?
- ✔ You vandalized or destroyed school property.
- ✔ You brought drugs or alcohol to school.
- ✔ You brought cigarettes to school.

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## ACTIVITIES

*I am going to move on to the next section. It is about activities you would enjoy doing after school or on the weekends in the CASASTART program.*

- ✔ What are some things that you enjoy doing?
- ✔ What are some things you would say you are good at?
- ✔ What are some activities you wish you could try (what would you like to learn how to do)?
- ✔ What are some activities you and your family might enjoy doing in the evenings or on weekends?
- ✔ Do you belong to any religious organization? If so, what kind?

## PERSONAL LIFE

*The next series of questions are about your personal life. I want to learn about you so that we can work together to get you what you want out of this program and help you to do well in school. Your truthful answers will not lead to punishment of any kind.*

### Physical Health

How many times have you been to the doctor in the last year?

○ Never ○ 1 time ○ 2 times
○ 3 to 5 times ○ 6 or more times

- ✔ Have you been kept overnight in a hospital in the last 6 months? If so, can you describe why and what happened?

Please answer yes or no if you have ever had one of the following health problems:

○ Head injury ○ Eye problems
○ Ear problems ○ Asthma

Please tell me about any other health problems.

- ✔ Are you taking any medications prescribed by your doctor? If so, please tell me what they are and what they're for.

[DO NOT ASK THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS IF CLIENT IS UNDER AGE 11.]

- ✔ Have you had sex in the past year?
- ✔ If so, are you using condoms and/or any kind of birth control?
- ✔ If so, what are you using and do you use it every time?

Have you ever:

[BOYS:] gotten someone pregnant?

[GIRLS:] gotten pregnant?

### Mental Health

Are you currently seeing a counselor, social worker, psychologist or psychiatrist? If so, what is his or her name? Do you have a number I can call to contact that person? If not, have you ever been referred to or had any encounters with a counselor?

We will not give information or receive information about you without your prior written consent.

*I am going to read some statements. For each one, I want you to tell me if the statement I read is true for you in the past 12 months. If it is not true you can just say "no" or "false," and I'll move on to the next one. Your truthful answers will not lead to punishment of any kind.*

- ✔ You had a serious accident or illness.
- ✔ Someone close to you was seriously ill or died.
- ✔ You were angry a lot of the time.
- ✔ You felt good about yourself or proud of yourself.


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- ✔ You were good friends with another person your own age.
- ✔ You got into fights with other youth.
- ✔ You often lost your temper.
- ✔ You felt lonely.
- ✔ You felt like hurting yourself.
- ✔ You felt worried about the adults in your household.
- ✔ You feared that someone might hurt you.
- ✔ You started dating or having a girlfriend or boyfriend regularly.
- ✔ You started earning your own money.
- ✔ You felt safe a lot of the time.
- ✔ You smoked cigarettes.
- ✔ You drank alcohol.
- ✔ You felt depressed or down.
- ✔ You used marijuana.

[DO NOT USE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS IF CLIENT IS UNDER AGE 11.]

- ✔ You used harder drugs: crack, cocaine or heroin.
- ✔ You had sex.

*The following questions are very general. Feel free to give short or long answers.*

- ✔ What makes you happy?
- ✔ What makes you angry?
- ✔ What makes you sad?

## JUVENILE JUSTICE

*I am going to read another series of statements. For each one, I want you to tell me if the statement I read is true for you in the past 12 months. If it is not true, you can just say "no" or "false," and I'll move on to the next one. Your truthful answers will not lead to punishment of any kind.*

- ✔ A police officer caught you doing something illegal.
- ✔ You were arrested.
- ✔ You shoplifted.
- ✔ You stole valuable property.
- ✔ You hit or threatened to hit others.
- ✔ You sold or bought illegal drugs.
- ✔ You were approached about being in a gang.
- ✔ You joined a gang.
- ✔ You carried a weapon.

## FAMILY LIFE

*The next set of questions are about your home life and your family.*

- ✔ Name three good things about your family.
- ✔ Who do you currently live with (name all of the people living in your home)?
- ✔ If you do not live with your father, how often do you see him?
- ✔ If you do not live with your mother, how often do you see her?
- ✔ Which adult do you feel closest to in your family?
- ✔ Who would you say is the head of your household?

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- ✔ Does this person have a job where they earn money?
- ✔ Have you ever been in foster care? If so, how long did you live in foster care?
- ✔ How long have you lived in your current home?

*Many people have family members who use drugs and alcohol or who are violent. Sometimes, the people using drugs and alcohol have other problems. I want to remind you about what I said earlier—if there are questions that feel hard to answer, please say so. I'll ask it another way or you can let me know what is difficult or uncomfortable about it for you. Your truthful answers to the following questions will help me to make their participation in CASASTART worthwhile.*

- ✔ Not including you, has any member of your family or another person living in your household had problems with drinking too much? If so, has this person ever received treatment?
- ✔ Not including you, has any member of your family or another person living in your household had problems with drugs? If yes, has this person ever received treatment?
- ✔ Has any member of your family or another person living in your household ever had any involvement with the police or courts?
- ✔ Does a social worker ever visit your home to talk to your parents or caregivers?
- ✔ Are there other people who try to help your family? If so, what are their names and can you tell me how to contact them?

## MISCELLANEOUS

*I am going to read a final series of statements. Please tell me if the statement has been true for you in the past 12 months. Feel free to describe the event as much as you like.*

- ✔ You had a family meal with most or all members of your household once a week.
- ✔ Your parents or caregivers changed jobs or lost a job.
- ✔ A new brother or sister was born.
- ✔ Someone in your family developed a serious health problem.
- ✔ The adults in your house fought with each other a lot.
- ✔ The kids in your house fought with each other a lot.
- ✔ Your parents/guardians got divorced or separated.
- ✔ You ran away from home.
- ✔ You were kicked out of your home.

## FUTURE PLANS

- ✔ Name three things you would like to do when you are an adult.
- ✔ Name three things you would like to do in the next two years.

*We've completed the entire questionnaire. I will be happy to talk about how you feel about the questions if you like. You can read this questionnaire whenever you want to. If you have questions about how I will use your answers, I am happy to answer them.*

*How are you doing after all of this?*

## Draft an Agreement With the Child and Family 5

Just like partner agencies, youth who agree to join CASASTART also experience the advantages, responsibilities and challenges that come with participation in the program. Getting a child's and her or his family's buy-in for the program can be as important as getting buy-in from the lead agency, school or police.

Use the following pledge, created by CASASTART staff in Philadelphia, as a basis for establishing an agreement with the child. Change it or modify it just as you would a partner agreement so that the child feels a personal investment in his or her participation in the program.

### A CHILD'S PERSONAL COMMITMENT TO CASASTART

As a member of the CASASTART program, I pledge my commitment to:

- Attend school every day except when I have a medical problem.
- Participate in all CASASTART activities.
- Treat my family, friends, the CASASTART staff and others whom I meet with respect, and expect to be treated well in return.
- Make friends with people I like, who like me and who treat me with respect.
- Work hard to get the best grades I know I can get.
- Work with a tutor on the subjects that are hardest.
- Behave in the classroom and cooperate with teachers.
- Avoid acting in a way that can lead to school detention or suspension.
- Avoid doing things that harm my body and my mind, including: smoking cigarettes or marijuana, drinking alcohol and using all other illegal drugs.
- Avoid places where people are smoking cigarettes or marijuana and using other illegal drugs.
- Avoid violence in my neighborhood, at school and at home.
- Speak to my counselor and/or case manager if I have a desire to hurt myself or others.
- Learn the name of one police officer in my school or neighborhood.
- Think and talk about what I want for my future with the people I care about and who care about me.
- I understand that as a participant in the CASASTART program, I must show up for and take part in all activities. CASASTART is a voluntary program, and if I continually disrespect or refuse to take part in the opportunities offered, I will have to leave the program.

_____
[signature of participant and date]

_____
[signature of parent and date]

_____
[signature of case manager and date]

_____
[signature of police officer and date]

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## 6 Make Regular Contact With the Child

A CASASTART case manager must be accessible to the child and family **twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week**. Home visits with participating youth should occur twice a month for the first six months and at least once a month for the duration of the child's participation in the program. Use these meetings to review progress by discussing challenges, changes, successes or difficulties the child is experiencing.

In addition to individual and/or group meetings with the child and home visits with the family, CASASTART case managers must create opportunities to spend time with a child in his or her own environment. Contact establishes trust and can increase the child's safety and sense of security. The case managers should have face-to-face contact with each child on their own caseload at least twice a week or a total of at least six hours per month.

Find out what a child's day-to-day experience is like and become a consistent, caring presence within these domains while engaging other adults in the child's life to do the same. Determine to make contact with a child on the way to school, in school, after school and at home or on the weekends. For example:

*On the way to school:*

- Is the child traveling with friends, family or alone?
- How does the child feel about this trip—are there kids on the bus who frequently start trouble, streets along the way that feel scary to the child, opportunities along the way to do, buy or sell drugs or to make money fast?
- Is the trip long enough, boring enough, lonely enough or fraught with enough dangerous activity that a child could be expected to turn off the path altogether, miss another day of school and figure that no one will miss him or her anyway?

*In school:*

- Several times a day, a child must pass through hallways, up and down stairways, use the restroom—whom does the child encounter during this time?
- Does the child have friends at school? Do the friends go to class?
- Does the child have enemies?
- Are certain areas of the school known for being threatening, an obstacle course of taunting, ridicule and opportunities to fight or play games of "I dare you"?
- Is recess fun? How about lunch, gym class or free period?
- Is there anything about school that the child looks forward to—a teacher, classmate, counselor or class?
- What makes going to school worthwhile?

*After school:*

- Does the child travel directly home from school?
- If so, is this the rule the child's parents have set? Is it the only alternative since there are no clubs or activities to participate in, or is no one asking the child to join?
- What does the child want to do?
- Are there opportunities to play sports, play music, play video games—and if so, are there any adults involved in coaching, leading or joining in on these activities, anyone there to say, "Nice shot," "Oh, you almost got it," or "You are really getting the hang of this."?
- Has the child got whatever books or materials he or she needs to do homework that evening; does the child understand the assignments and how to begin?
- Is there time to relax, walk and talk, leave the stress of the school day behind—and if so, does the child know the difference between relaxing and having nothing to do?


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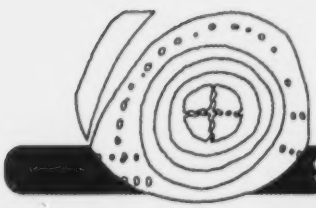
*At home:*

- Is there anyone at home to greet the child, offer food, ask about the child's day?
- What's good about coming home—is it a relief, a safe haven? Or is it as stressful as school may have been—unpredictable and difficult to navigate?
- Does the child start working as soon as she or he steps in the door—babysitting, preparing dinner, cleaning up after a parent or other family member?
- If no one is home, is there someone the child can call to say, "I'm here. School was okay. I'll see you later."?
- Do the parents or caregivers speak English. If not, is the child called upon to provide translation for them?
- What time does the child go to bed?

Meet a child, walk with a child, play with a child and drop by for five minutes or even one minute in the middle of a school day. Create a system in which the child can notify at least one family member, friend of the family, neighbor or the case manager about how the day went and what the child wants or needs to do next.



## School Principal

■ *Phyllis Williams*
*Principal, IS 143*
**New York, New York**

I've been associated with this school for over 30 years. I grew up in this neighborhood, so I am a child of this community. My 80-year-old father who lives nearby says to me, "As much as things have changed here, they've also stayed the same." We didn't have the same kinds of pressures as kids do today with drugs, but the community is still a working community—always welcoming toward new arrivals, always crowded and full of folks willing to take any opportunity to work hard and struggle to make a better life.

CASASTART was created when the community based organization, Alianza Dominicana, brought together community resources, police, this school and Columbia Presbyterian Hospital, a major employer and health provider in this area, to form a community advisory board. Their case managers motivated us to start identifying and referring at-risk youth. When the case managers visited the homes to invite the kids and families to join CASASTART, they found a myriad of problems kids were facing every day. Maybe the family was displaced from another country or the mom was completely overwhelmed with working late shifts at a factory that's an hour and a half away from home.

The parents get so much out of the program. These services provide an opportunity for parents to share their thoughts, get help and some perspective. It's very isolating to be the parent of a middle school-aged kid. They need someone to listen and respond when they say, "He's thirteen years old and six foot two inches tall—what am I going to do with him?" CASASTART offers a forum for parents to come together and talk about what works.

The folks who run the START program are very good. This has been a five- or six-year collaboration, and at this point, the case managers and counselors are part of the school; they go after the kids and do the legwork. Our guidance counselor and drug counselor are both very active with CASASTART. We can't get to every single kid—we have 2,000 kids here—but we have our success stories.

## 7 Conduct an Intake and Assessment Interview With the Family

Case managers should interview the parent or other adult family member who is closest to the child (usually this is the head of the household or primary caretaker) at home or in some other location where this person is likely to feel comfortable, safe and free to speak openly about experiences.

## Family Intake and Assessment Questionnaire

Be sure to get the child's name in addition to the parent's or caregiver's name, date of birth, age, gender, date of interview, address, contact information and cultural background, race or ethnicity.

**Italicized text may be useful to you as a script for introducing segments of the interview in a way that builds trust with the family member. Feel free to introduce and ask questions in your own style.**

*Even though there may be several children under your care, this interview is about the child who has been referred to CASASTART. These questions are designed so that I can get a good sense of the relationship between you and your child and how your household is run. The more I know about you and your child, the more I can help you both get what you want over the next two years.* ***Generally, your truthful answers will not be shared with anyone except in cases where there is evidence of abuse or neglect. We have to report it if you tell us that you're thinking of hurting yourself or someone else. We also have to report it if someone is hurting you.*** *If you do not feel comfortable answering certain questions now, you can say so. We will come back to them later. Or you can let me know if there is a way we can talk about certain things that would feel more comfortable for you.*



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## FAMILY LIFE

- ✔ Who is the head of the household?
- ✔ Who do you currently live with (name all of the people living in your home)?

[IF PERSON BEING INTERVIEWED IS NOT THE CHILD'S FATHER] Does the child's father live at home? If not, how often does the child see his or her father?

[IF PERSON BEING INTERVIEWED IS NOT THE CHILD'S MOTHER] Does the child's mother live at home? If not, how often does the child see his or her mother?

- ✔ How many children do you have?
- ✔ What are their ages?
- ✔ How many live with you?
- ✔ Do you have any children in foster care or living out of the home, such as with relatives?
- ✔ Has the number of people living in your household changed over the last year—has anyone moved in or moved out?
- ✔ How long have you lived in your current home?
- ✔ How would you characterize yourself:

  Married, Single, Have a partner, Divorced, Separated, Widowed
- ✔ How often do you and your child eat a meal together where you talk to one another?
- ✔ Among the people living in this household, who would you say your child is closest to?
- ✔ Do you know your child's friends? If so, what is your opinion of them?
- ✔ What do you want your child to get out of participating in CASASTART?
- ✔ What do you want to get out of participating in CASASTART?

*I am going to read a series of statements that point to ways you and your child interact and how your child is getting along in school. Please tell me whether the statement is true for you in the past 12 months. If it is not true, you can just say "no" or "false," and I'll move on to the next one. Your truthful answers will not lead to punishment of any kind, unless there is evidence of serious criminal acts or child maltreatment.*

- ✔ You attended a meeting at school regarding your child's behavior.
- ✔ Your child was not promoted to the next grade.
- ✔ Your child vandalized, destroyed or set fire to something.
- ✔ Your child has gotten into a physical fight with someone.
- ✔ Your child has been involved with the courts as a result of being arrested.
- ✔ Your child has stolen property.
- ✔ Your child has met with a psychologist, social worker or psychiatrist.

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## FINANCIAL SUPPORT

*The next set of questions will help me to understand what kind of support you get through your job, church or community.*

✔ Your current employment status is:
- O Full time
- O Part time
- O Seasonally employed
- O Unemployed
- O Retired
- O Fully disabled

✔ What is the main source of income for your family?
- O Employment
- O Public Assistance
- O Supplemental Security Income
- O Social Security, Pension

✔ If you are on public assistance, are you involved in a welfare-to-work program?

✔ Do you get money from:
- O Church
- O Family
- O Friends
- O Other *(please specify)*

_____

_____

_____

## EDUCATION

✔ How is your child doing in school?

✔ What is your educational history?
- O High school graduate
- O High school equivalency degree
- O Not a high school graduate
- O Some college
- O College degree
- O Graduate degree

✔ If you would like to pursue more education, please specify what kinds of classes, training or degree would interest you.

## AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

Is a social worker currently involved with you and your family? If so, please tell me the name of the agency as well as the name of the social worker and their contact information, if available. We would like to be in contact with that person/s in order to coordinate efforts. We will not give information or receive information about you without your prior written consent.

## INTERPERSONAL VIOLENCE

I would like to know about experiences or events where you or your child were injured due to physical and/or verbal abuse. Please tell me whether the statement I read is true for you in the past 12 months. If it is not true, you can just say "no" or "false," and I'll move on to the next one. Your truthful answers will not lead to punishment of any kind.

- ✔ You have been hit or threatened in the last year.
- ✔ Your children have been hit or threatened in the last year.
- ✔ You have a restraining order against someone.
- ✔ You have a history of being sexually or physically abused.
- ✔ If any of the above statements are true, how would you like CASASTART to assist you?

## DRUG USE

- ✔ Has any member of your family, including yourself, or another person living in your household had problems with drinking too much? If so, has this person ever received treatment?
- ✔ Has any member of your family or another person living in your household had problems with drugs? If yes, has this person ever received treatment?

## LEGAL

- ✔ Have any members of your family or another person living in your household ever had any involvement with the police or courts? If so, have any of them been:
  - O Arrested
  - O Held in jail/detention
  - O Convicted of a crime
  - O Put on probation
  - O Sent to a training school or prison

## MENTAL HEALTH

- ✔ Have any members of your family been diagnosed with or struggled with mental illness? If so, has that person ever received treatment, or are they currently being treated?
- ✔ Are you currently seeing a counselor, social worker, psychologist or psychiatrist for help in dealing with anxiety or any other mental health problems? If not, have you ever been referred to a mental health professional or had any encounters with one?



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## REFERRALS

*I am going to read a list of topics that you may be interested in. For each one, please tell me whether you are "not interested," "interested' or "very interested" in receiving more information about these issues.*

- Managing time
- Parenting
- Decision-making
- Handling stress
- Resume writing
- Job search skills
- Child development
- Helping your child to achieve in school
- Handling discipline, fighting
- Improving communication
- Filling out applications
- Sex education
- Housing
- Living with teenagers
- Battered families
- Dealing with the welfare/ Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF) department
- Divorce law
- Food
- Child custody and child support enforcement
- Drug or alcohol treatment
- Restraining/no-contact orders
- Immigration issues
- English classes

*Is there anything I have not mentioned that you would be interested in learning more about?*

## HEALTH CARE

*Please indicate from the following list what you need regarding your own or a family member's health:*

- A doctor
- A dentist
- Information about diabetes or "sugar"
- Information about asthma
- Information about high blood pressure and hypertension
- Information about nutrition and eating habits
- Information about HIV/AIDS or other sexually transmitted diseases and infections
- Information about caring for a sick child
- Information about pregnancy and having a healthy baby
- Help for dealing with drug issues
- Help for dealing with alcohol issues
- Information about preventing lead poisoning

*Is there anything I have not mentioned that you need or want?*



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## COMMITMENT TO PARTICIPATE IN CASASTART

- ✔ Are you able and willing to participate in meetings with other parents to share success and challenges involving your child?
- ✔ Are you able and willing to attend various programs, special events and social gatherings? If so, are there certain times of the day and week that work best for you?
- ✔ Are you able and willing to provide transportation for yourself and your child to attend functions?
- ✔ Are you able and willing to serve as a chaperone on some field trips, events or outings?
- ✔ Are there any other members of your family who may be able and willing to get involved in CASASTART—this may be someone who can serve as a representative for your child at meetings or someone who can provide transportation or act as chaperone?
- ✔ Are there any other ways you would like to get involved in CASASTART?
- ✔ Please name three strengths you have observed in your child.
- ✔ Please name three strengths you would like CASASTART to help your child to develop.
- ✔ Please tell me three things about your family that you feel proud of or happy about.
- ✔ Do you have any questions about CASASTART?

*We've completed the entire questionnaire.*

*I am happy to talk about how you feel about the questions if you like.*

*You can read this questionnaire whenever you want to.*

*If you have questions about how I will use your answers, I am happy to answer them.*

*How are you feeling after all of this?*

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## Deliver the Eight Service Components of CASASTART

Social support, family services, education services, after-school and summer activities, mentoring, incentives, community policing/ enhanced enforcement and juvenile justice intervention work together to help a child feel more connected, supported and helped. They prepare a child to cope and to achieve at school, at home and in relationships with peers and people in authority.

These eight service components of CASASTART also nurture a child's desire and ability to grow up healthy, making healthy decisions along the way. The service components are designed to draw attention away from a child's negative or acting-out behavior and, instead, channel as much positive attention toward the child as possible. It is the comprehensive and dynamic nature of service delivery that makes the program successful—not the undivided components in and of themselves.

### ① Social Support

Case managers provide extensive social support to participating children and their families through referrals to agencies that offer financial assistance and a range of health care options, and by facilitating productive interactions between agencies, children and families. Additionally, case managers work to create more regular and positive contact between families, teachers, principals and local police.

CASASTART has provided significant social support to children and families by providing children with:

- Day-to-day and crisis counseling;
- Intervention;
- Emotional support;
- Transportation and assistance in managing relationships with peers and family.

### ② Family Services

Family services are designed to reduce the amount of stress in parents' and caregivers' lives by linking families with activities that improve their physical and mental well-being. They may also include a range of opportunities for adults in the family to pursue education and recreation.

CASASTART has provided services for families of participating youth by:

- Connecting drug- and alcohol-addicted and mentally ill parents with treatment facilities and counseling. This may include finding or providing transportation to and from therapy sessions and meetings for people in recovery;
- Facilitating family members' participation in classes and workshops targeted to their specific needs, hobbies and personal interests;
- Offering group counseling sessions weekly to discuss different topics related to parenting, stress and household management;
- Arranging small group activities for one or more families to eat out at a restaurant together, go bowling, go to the movies, have picnics, etc.;
- Engaging families in planning celebrations and ceremonies to honor their kids.
- Finding new apartments for families living in overcrowded and, at times, hazardous conditions;
- Advocating on the families' behalf to landlords, customer service representatives, financial institutions and health care workers and facilities.

comprehensive approach

## ③ Education Services

Education services reduce incidents of misbehavior, academic failure and truancy. The program does this by bringing greater stability to a child's home environment so the child will have the energy and mental clarity to pay attention in school and learn. It also works to improve a child's attitude about being in school in the first place by creating opportunities outside the classroom where the child can feel smart, successful, heard, understood and valued.

CASASTART has delivered innovative education services to participating youth by:

- Structuring mandatory tutoring and homework assistance sessions after school interwoven with recreational activities and snacks;
- Creating opportunities for youth to express themselves and develop literacy through writing and reading groups;
- Offering weekly storytelling sessions to introduce children to books and literature they might enjoy.

## ④ After School and Summer Activities

After school and summer activities give kids a chance to go on outings and build relationships with adults who coach, encourage and reward them simply for showing up and trying something new. Activities get kids off the street, the curb or the couch, thereby reducing their exposure to and potential for getting involved in harmful activities. CASASTART staff, partners and mentors develop a rapport with the kids and know that the children are supervised and safe.

Sports teams and physical activities promote health and teach children how to work off stress and energy in acceptable ways. Through participation in sports, children can achieve immediate goals with the one-on-one support of a coach, case manager, police officer or mentor who explains strategies for achieving, encourages the child's efforts and notes every success.

After school and recreational activities offered through CASASTART have included:

- Trips to museums, aquariums, sports events, amusement parks, local colleges and overnight camps;
- Training in leadership and job skills;
- Workshops on anger management and effective communication;
- Substance abuse prevention classes;
- Classes in anatomy, sex education and pregnancy and disease prevention;
- Weekly meetings led by a social worker or therapist where youth can discuss relationship issues, family problems and other challenges in their lives;
- Community problem-solving sessions led by youth;
- Ceremonies and events to celebrate rites of passage and recognize kids for strong attendance records, grade promotion, improved academic performance and other successes.

## ⑤ Mentoring

Mentoring helps children form attachments outside of the family with a consistent, caring adult. Mentors demonstrate responsible leadership and act as guides or helpers to the child.

CASASTART has matched children with mentors by:

- Hiring local college students to tutor, provide homework assistance, teach a child specific skills in computers and technology and attend special events and activities;
- Partnering with agencies such as Big Brothers/Big Sisters to recruit trained volunteer mentors;
- Inviting police officers and local athletes to make a commitment to a child in CASASTART;
- Tapping into professional networks where members are willing to offer mentoring in careers and job skills.



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## 6 Incentives

Incentives may take the form of special events and celebrations to recognize kids for improving academic performance, being promoted to the next grade and achieving in sports or another area of interest. Children may also earn modest stipends, for example, five dollars a week, for a perfect school attendance record and consistent participation in CASASTART activities.

CASASTART sites have offered incentives, including:

- Events throughout the school year to recognize grade improvement, grade promotion, improved behavior and attendance in school, athletic accomplishments and the development of new skills;
- Seasonal and holiday-related parties, dances, picnics and celebrations;
- Weekly stipends and "achievers club" memberships to reward regular participation in tutoring and mentoring sessions;
- Referrals for paid internships at local businesses and community based organizations.

## 7 Community Policing/ Enhanced Enforcement

Increased police visibility and enhanced enforcement reduce children's exposure to crime, improve public safety and motivate community involvement in substance abuse and crime prevention. Police precincts in target neighborhoods partner with CASASTART to raise the quantity and quality of interactions with community members. Their willingness to provide greater access for families and youth participating in CASASTART leads to greater accountability and trust.

As partners in CASASTART, local law enforcement officials have:

- Attended regular case conference meetings to discuss individual youth;
- Acted as mentors, athletic coaches and chaperones;
- Created safe corridors to and from school;
- Accompanied case managers on home visits;
- Set up office space and "mini precincts" in schools, storefronts and housing projects;
- Taught classes and led presentations in schools on substance abuse prevention and anger management.

## 8 Juvenile Justice Intervention

By partnering with juvenile court personnel, CASASTART expands and improves options for children involved in the juvenile justice system. Case managers and mentors within CASASTART are equipped to offer alternatives, structure and monitoring to children involved in the juvenile justice system. Case managers may also coordinate opportunities for youth to fulfill their community service requirements, get counseling and gain access to specialized education programs.

As partners in CASASTART, juvenile court personnel have:

- Expanded efforts to work with younger, first-time offenders;
- Designated a juvenile probation officer to act as a liaison to CASASTART by attending case conference meetings to discuss individual youth;
- Backed up community policing with effective and speedy sanctioning of criminal activity;
- Stepped up incarceration for violent offenders;
- Intensified supervision of parolees.

## 9 Make Regular Contact With Families

A CASASTART case manager must be accessible to a family twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Case conferences and/or home visits with participating families should occur no less than once a month for the duration of the family's participation in the program. Use these meetings to review progress by discussing challenges, changes, successes or difficulties the family is experiencing.

A healthy working relationship with families comes from a case manager's willingness to:

- Identify and validate the family's strengths;
- Listen to and not censor or judge the family's experiences and perspectives;
- Acknowledge and accept the family's values and characteristics;
- Recognize where values between the case manager and client are not shared and allow these differences to exist simultaneously;
- Maintain realistic and positive expectations;
- Constantly work to improve and expand a family's options.

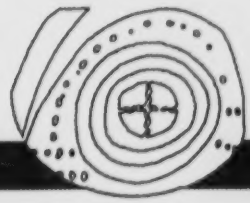
### TIPS for developing a successful case management approach

✔ **Foster an environment** where case management staff can communicate openly and often about strategies, setbacks, problems and concerns.

✔ **Create a message board** through email or some other means where case management staff can regularly seek and get practical help for dealing with specific problems.

✔ **Prioritize the health and well-being of case management staff.** The hours are long and unpredictable. Support case management staff in honing skills in time management, prioritizing goals, setting healthy boundaries, recognizing limitations and avoiding burnout.

✔ **Support case management staff** administratively by delegating work that does not have to be completed by the case manager. Give case managers proper authority, build respectful, professional relationships within the CASASTART program and keep expectations realistic and positive.



## Community Police

We partnered with CASASTART because we want to help kids make good decisions that translate into a better quality of their lives, and because we have seen how drug abuse diminishes and destroys kids' lives. As law enforcement officials, we face ongoing struggles related to crime, fear and disorder in the community. A good amount of this has its basis in narcotics abuse.

Drug abuse is a violation of law but it is not a crime. However, it is this violation of law that contributes to the types of crimes that we have to deal with most often. A person who wants money to make another drug purchase will burglarize residences, restaurants and warehouses. A person looking for wallets, purses, CD players and anything else that they can obtain and quickly sell to buy more drugs will break into cars. Narcotics abuse also contributes to huge numbers of robberies and muggings, since just about everybody walking around has money on them. Those individuals who need money immediately can accost someone and find enough loot to make their purchases.

Another issue for us is how the use of narcotics creates dysfunctional families. If a parent or an older sibling is involved in drug abuse and committing crimes to get more money to buy drugs, then this teaches young people that it's okay to live that way. If the person who is closest to the kid is under the influence of drugs, how can that person help a child in terms of learning and achieving in academia? They can't. It doesn't work and this adds to the overall degradation of kids' lives and of our society.

I do all that I can from a strategic standpoint to try to prevent crime and family dysfunction that stems from narcotics abuse. That means directing undercover officers or sending uniformed personnel to a particular area; it means mobilizing the community and working with the community to prevent drug abuse and crime—as opposed to putting people in jail. With kids, we just want to help them learn a way to make positive contributions to society and, one day, to the whole families they will create as adults.

■ *Captain Kyle B. Jackson, Area Commanding Officer of the Northeast Community Police Station*
**Los Angeles Police Department** **Los Angeles, California**

## Common Problems, Uncommon Solutions

Please use this section to find ideas for confronting similar situations in your program.

### CASASTART has encountered certain recurring problems in the area of working with families.

**Common Problem:** Families are resistant, don't want to work, don't show up; families are hostile and defensive.

**Uncommon Solution:** Families may seem resistant when they are moving at a pace that is slower than that of the case manager. But families will work in their own way on issues that they identify as important and relevant. Are the issues that are valued by the case manager the same as those the family has prioritized? In situations where the family is experienced by case management staff or other service providers as hostile or defensive, keep the focus on what it is the family wants to get out of CASASTART. Ask the question until at least that point is clear. Then, let that point be the guide for all program staff, partners and families while moving forward. Continue working to establish trust.

**Common Problem:** Families do not share important and relevant information; families distort or withhold the truth about important matters.

**Uncommon Solution:** People have a right to keep personal information private. No matter how urgent a matter feels and, perhaps, is, case managers cannot be expected to have all the information all of the time. It is not in their power. Be clear and direct about the reasons why sharing truthful information is beneficial to the child and family. "Who wants to know?" and "Why should I?" are valid questions. Respect people's privacy and be straightforward when explaining both why the information is essential and why you believe it is in the family's best interests to reveal themselves in this particular way.

**Common Problem:** Families feel displaced by or jealous of case manager's close relationship with the child; families feel shut out from the process of helping the child; families feel disempowered, powerless, hopeless.

**Uncommon Solution:** Family members may resent an outsider's influence and impact on a child—especially when the impact is a positive one. A family member may see the child's success in the program as reinforcement of his or her own failure to provide for the child. Families who feel jealous or less-than-necessary as a result of CASASTART need to be reminded that the child's ability to thrive has everything to do with the family's support and encouragement. Beyond reassuring the family of their primary importance in the child's life, make an additional effort to engage the family's participation. Evaluate honestly the case manager's involvement in the child's life. Suggest changes in any area where a family member may be able and willing to do more for the child.

**Common Problem:** Case manager feels overloaded, overinvolved, overextended and overwhelmed by families' needs.

**Uncommon Solution:** When working with families that are in distress, doing "enough" may feel impossible. Because case management is about crossing traditional boundaries—spending time in families' homes, keeping confidential information, managing crises—it can be difficult to know where to draw the line. A good thing to trust, however, is the case manager's own instincts. If the case manager is an experienced, mature, caring and responsible professional, and the involvement feels too deep or too enmeshed, there's the line. Case managers are no good to anyone burned out, oppressed or depressed. Re-evaluate the goals and priorities—are they realistic? Keep in mind: "realistic" is not the same as "important" or even "urgent."

**Common Problem:** Families are drug and/or alcohol addicted and impossible to work with.

**Uncommon Solution:** Trying to change families into people they are not will only make matters more difficult. CASASTART is not a treatment program, a hospital or a moral authority. Partners work together to link people with systems of care, to connect people with resources and support and, when necessary, to use legal action and intervention to prevent crime and abuse. CASASTART is about building a system that links people with what they say they want and need, and about protecting clients and the community from harm. Case management staff can do no more than offer options, encouragement, motivation and consistent attention for as long as the family is participating on a regular basis. If this is not the case, termination from the program is a final option.

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**CASASTART has encountered certain recurring problems delivering the eight service components.**

**Common Problem:** Kids don't show up for tutoring or mentoring; as a result, tutors and mentors quit.

**Uncommon Solution:** Keep offering the sessions and keep requiring children's participation. Use incentives such as snacks, opportunities to socialize and rewards for perfect attendance to attract the youth and keep them interested. Let tutors and mentors know up front that the child may need a lot of additional encouragement to get going. Engage tutors and mentors who keep showing up, even though the child may not, and who will be creative about getting a child's attention and keeping it.

**Common Problem:** Incentives seem more like bribing kid to do what's right; incentives don't send a good message.

**Uncommon Solution:** The kids in this program are there, in part, because they don't get this message enough—that their presence, their work and their efforts matter, and that they deserve to be celebrated, recognized and rewarded. The program does not reward misbehavior or self-destructive behavior. Rather, it creates opportunities for children to receive positive attention and encouragement from as many directions and as many people as possible. Incentives send a message to the child that he or she is valued and worth knowing.

**Common Problem:** Kids are doing drugs, skipping school, doing everything they're not supposed to.

**Uncommon Solution:** Hold children to their agreements just as you would your partners. When problems arise, sit down with the child and consider the advantages, responsibilities and challenges of being involved in the program. Help the child figure out whether the advantages are worth the responsibilities. Encourage the child to express any negative feelings about being in the program. Keep the child at the negotiating table. Draft an entirely new agreement with the child in her or his own way of speaking if you think it will help. Get parents, siblings, mentors or other partners involved if you think that will help. If time, negotiations, compromises, counseling and partners' efforts fail to keep a child interested and engaged, the child may not be ready to do the program. Termination from the program is a final option.

# How To Obtain Funds & Achieve Visibility To Sustain Your Program

# HOW TO OBTAIN FUNDS AND ACHIEVE VISIBILITY TO SUSTAIN YOUR PROGRAM

This section describes how to:

1. **Use evaluation findings to make the case for CASASTART**
2. **Identify sources of funding**
3. **Create a media and marketing strategy**

CASASTART creates new channels for reaching children and their families and paves new paths leading to opportunity for the whole community. The convergence of outcomes—such as enhanced police presence, teachers and principals who feel supported, social service agencies with clear missions and capabilities, families who are getting the help and care they need and students who are successful learners—lead to changes in the environment that extend far beyond the boundaries of program participants' lives. This aspect of the program increases its attractiveness to funding sources as well as to media and political representatives.



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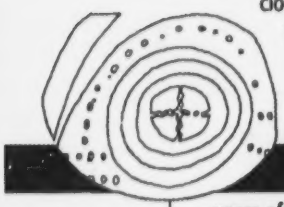
## Use Evaluations To Make the Case For CASASTART

Making the case for CASASTART means making the case for youth and communities that society is inclined to give up on. Children who are eligible to participate in CASASTART are, by definition, not getting what they need elsewhere in their lives. They exhibit serious behavioral and emotional problems, engage in high risk activities and do not yet have the skills or support necessary to make healthy decisions.

Repeated attempts by schools, police, families or social service agencies to draw them in and keep them safe have, so far, failed. They live in environments ranging from unstable to unsafe. And the individuals and agencies who are in a position to help may have passed the point of trying to work with these youth whom they perceive as "a lost cause."

That's where CASASTART comes in. The program unites the efforts of schools, police, parents and social service agencies to create a unique, powerful and comprehensive approach to prevention and intervention. It addresses problems—structural problems within communities and within families—that other programs won't go near.



**Local Government**

I am the county judge and chief executive of the Commissioner's Court, which is made up of four commissioners and myself. We control the budget of the juvenile probation department, sheriff's department, juvenile courts and the jail. I'm using my clout as a county judge and the fact that we control the budget to make a case for CASASTART.

There's a lot of support for CASASTART across all of these departments. Our situation in El Paso is that one-third of the population is 18 years of age and younger. Together with our sister communities, which have a population of 2 million, over 50 percent of people are age 18 or younger. El Paso is a major drug port, and almost half of the county budget is spent on law enforcement. We're trying to get away from putting people in jail, and with such a large population of young people who are at risk, we want to look at prevention, not incarceration. Unlike other criminal justice programs, CASASTART is comprehensive in how it serves young kids who are high risk by working with them in the context of their families.

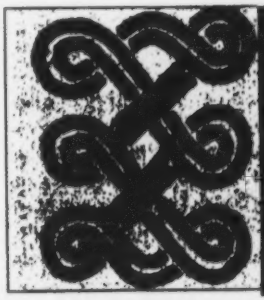
Recently, the county voted unanimously to ask the Commissioner's Court to move some money out of another line item and put it into CASASTART. Now that we've voted to commit the funding, we are in the process of contracting with a community-based organization to implement the program. My role has been to find an agency who can replicate the program in an outlying part of the county and to find catalytic funds to sustain it. The county cannot continue to support the program, but if we can get it started, I believe the program will sell itself.

The sheriff said, "If you're going to work on the outskirts of the county, focus on where there is nothing going on." So we're developing the program in a rural area where poverty is very high. There are a lot of families with a lot of young kids who are living out there—isolated from the rest of the community and from one another because it's so spread out. Most of them do not have running water or even electricity, so there is no entertainment and nothing for the kids to do.

The only other entities out there are the sheriff's department and the schools, and both need some help. They know what the problem is and they know who the problem kids are, but they don't have any intervention programs. The problems are so overwhelming, they have to really struggle to keep kids out of the system.

People need to know that when you're dealing with government, you need to have a champion inside government and you need to have patience. It may seem as though things aren't working, but it's just slow. In our case, the sheriff's department supports it, the juvenile probation office supports it, we support it, but now it's going to take some time. It's important to be realistic about how long it takes from getting a commitment to getting the program up and rolling. Do not be discouraged.

■ *Dolores Briones, County Judge*
**County of El Paso, El Paso, Texas**



CASASTART addresses problems that other programs won't go near.

Funding sources may look for system changes before they look at outcomes for kids. With partners in place and systems coordinated to deliver a range of services, CASASTART benefits the whole community. This is a major selling point for the program and distinguishes it from other efforts to promote positive youth development.

Evaluations of the program's effectiveness have shown its ability to prevent substance abuse, reduce violence, reduce drug-related crime, reduce delinquency, improve academic achievement, develop skills and self-reliance among youth and families, reduce the likelihood of child and domestic abuse, improve families' physical, emotional and financial well being, and coordinate and improve community-wide efforts to deliver youth and family services.

Use the following qualitative and quantitative findings on the impact of the CASASTART program and its precursor, Children At Risk (CAR), to make the case for CASASTART to funding sources, media and political representatives.

## The Impact of CAR and CASASTART

CASASTART began under the original name Children At Risk (CAR), a national research and demonstration program and partnership between CASA and the U.S. Department of Justice. CAR was evaluated in the following five cities: Austin, Texas; Bridgeport, Connecticut; Memphis, Tennessee; Newark, New Jersey; Savannah, Georgia; and Seattle, Washington. Results of this evaluation confirmed the program's impact and effectiveness, and its success became the foundation on which CASASTART is now built. Copies of the evaluation summary are available on CASA's Web site: **www.casacolumbia.org**.

Target communities, as well as those studied for comparison, had high rates of poverty, crime and drug dealing, high proportions of households headed by single women and large percentages of children living at or below poverty level and on public assistance. Target populations were mostly African American and Hispanic, with smaller percentages of Asian, American Indian and White children.

Children were referred to the program by case managers according to the previously outlined categories of family, school and personal risk. With their families' consent, they were then randomly assigned to one of three groups: a treatment group, a control group or a quasi-experimental group.

The treatment group included 338 children in the target neighborhoods who would receive services. The control group included 333 children who would not receive services but who lived in the target neighborhoods and may be affected by community-wide, enhanced policing strategies and improved social services. And the quasi-experimental group included 203 children who lived in other, similarly distressed areas and were not impacted by the CAR program, directly or indirectly.

The research and demonstration phase of the CAR program ended in 1996. What followed was a full evaluative report, published in the spring of 1998, on outcomes for children one year after their participation in the program. The Urban Institute, under contract to CASA and the National Institute for Justice, conducted the impact analysis of CAR proving that the program model for CASASTART works.

Compared with the control group, children who participated in CAR were shown to be:

- significantly less likely to use gateway and stronger drugs in the month before the follow-up survey;
- significantly less likely to use gateway and stronger drugs in the year before the follow-up survey;

- significantly less likely to report past month or lifetime involvement in drug trafficking.

Compared with the control group, children who participated in CAR reported:

- significantly lower levels of violent offenses in the year before the follow-up survey;
- significantly lower levels of association with delinquent peers;
- significantly higher levels of positive peer influence;
- significantly higher levels of positive peer support;
- significantly higher levels of participation in after school and learning activities;
- significantly higher levels of promotion to the next grade over the three years of the study.

Finally, CAR youth:

- had significantly higher levels of family cohesion than children in the control group;
- were more likely to turn to family members for help with problems than children in the control or quasi-experimental group;
- reported lower levels of harsh discipline by a family member than children in the control group;
- reported fewer days home alone than children in the control group;
- reported higher levels of support from other adults in the household than children in the quasi-experimental group.

**A series of in-depth interviews and focus groups conducted with CASASTART staff, partners, families and participants in 2000 also yielded overwhelmingly positive feedback about the program.**

**Partners**—including schools, police and social service agencies—described how collaboration in CASASTART:

- increased the number and amount of resources they could use;
- minimized isolation and offered greater support to partners in dealing with youth and their families;
- led to positive organizational change;
- enhanced their public image.

**Families** described how participation in CASASTART:

- marked their first positive experiences interacting with schools, police and case managers;
- improved their ability to communicate across language and cultural barriers;
- motivated them to take on a more supportive and active parenting role with their children;
- led to observable and dramatic improvements in their children's academic performance, behavior, communication skills and relationships with their caregivers.

## Theoretical Basis for CASASTART

The program integrates **five prominent social science theories:** social structural strain theory, social learning theory, systems theory, youth development theory and social control theory. CASASTART addresses each in a specific way.

- **Social structural strain theory**—which posits that antisocial or delinquent behavior is the result of a disconnection between shared social goals and the means individuals have to achieve those goals—is addressed as a formal commitment among all partners to improve institutional support systems and structures while facilitating real and meaningful connections between these structures and the youth and families they are intended to support.
- **Social learning theory**—which posits that youth learn behavior from exposure to the behavior of their peer groups—is addressed as a commitment to engage youth and their families in productive and rewarding group activities as a means of establishing new and positive group associations.

Among the **children** who participate in CASASTART, interviews revealed:

- more **positive attitudes toward school,** grades and homework;
- a significant **decrease in reported depression;**
- higher degrees of **positive life change;**
- feelings of **family cohesion;**
- more reports of **talking to a parent or other** adult about their problems.

This survey of partners' attitudes and experiences brought to light a number of recommendations for going forward, including:

- providing greater financial incentives to engage full participation of police and schools;
- providing training that specifically addresses the differences between the organizational cultures of collaborating organizations;
- providing ongoing consultation to the interagency team, as well as to individual participating agencies, regarding challenges and barriers to collaboration;
- increasing the amount of energy and attention devoted to incorporating CASASTART into existing program operations among partner agencies.

See "Advantages of Becoming a CASASTART Partner," page 16, for additional detailed findings on partners' positive experiences of working in collaboration on CASASTART.

## Identify Sources of Funding

With such a range of positive outcomes for youth, CASASTART appeals to a broad range of potential funding sources. By understanding the many ways in which this program benefits youth, families, schools and whole communities, you can make a compelling argument to attract long term funding from a variety of sources available in your area.

As you search government and foundation listings for money to support youth services, ask yourself the following questions:

- What are the funding sources in my area interested in today?
- In what ways does CASASTART address this issue or objective in my community?

Strategize with partners, members of your Advisory Council and program participants to create a compelling argument on how you will achieve desired outcomes.

---

- **Social control theory**—which posits that youth are influenced by the activities, values and norms of the groups to which they are bonded—is addressed as a commitment to promote bonding among youth, their families, and individuals and institutions that exert a positive influence in their lives.
- **Systems theory**—which posits that the work of individual actors are bound by ties of interrelated actions—is addressed through the development of a clear mission, roles, responsibilities and communications forums among the organizations involved in service delivery.
- **Youth development theory**—which posits that youth need access to safe places, challenging experiences and caring people on a daily basis in order to become successful adults—is addressed through broad comprehensive programs and services that develop life skills, promote the healthy development of adolescents and further the goals of youth and their families.



CASASTART Field Guide © CASA 2001.

## Create a Media and Marketing Strategy

A media and marketing strategy helps you to ensure that you are sending a strong and consistent message to the public, to the community, and to the youth and families that you serve. Potential partners, clients and funding sources look for confirmation of your credibility in newspaper and magazine articles, television and radio coverage, brochures and other materials you create. They also learn about the program through community presentations and word of mouth.

By finding numerous ways to tell the story of how CASASTART is changing people's lives in your community, you can attract funding and demonstrate to the public—which includes political leaders and others who can promote your work—that you are a leader in youth development.

### Develop Your Messages

Engage your partners, participating youth and families and other colleagues in a process of developing key messages to promote your CASASTART program.

**Stage a series of brainstorming sessions** where you and your partners identify the characteristics about your collaboration, your goals and your positive impact on youth and families that you would most like to share with the public.

**Identify and develop three main points** that will serve as your key messages. These points should be emotional and inspiring and should speak to your ability to produce positive outcomes for youth, families and communities.

**Avoid using jargon.** Find a common language that you and your partners can all use to describe your CASASTART program to the general public. Words that you understand and use within your professional circles are likely to alienate and confuse readers. Even if you are addressing an audience that includes policy makers and youth development professionals, keep the communication as simple and direct as possible without sacrificing the integrity of your program. In doing so, you eliminate barriers between "you" and "them" and bring your messages to a much broader audience.

**Tell stories that bring your program to life.** Readers want to know about changes in people's personal lives and in the community where they live. Profiles of a child or family who participate in the program provide an emotional and powerful way to communicate your message to funding sources, policy makers and community members alike. For instance, if one of your key points focuses on how participation in CASASTART improves children's academic performance, use an example from an actual child's life. Statements such as: "Since she joined the program, Melanie has had perfect attendance at school and improved her grades from mostly Ds, to Cs and Bs," let readers know that a life is at stake. The program is interesting because it concerns the future of a child who is working hard with the practical and emotional support of CASASTART to improve her chances at success.

**Test your messages on colleagues** inside and outside your professional circle. Get feedback from families, teachers, members of your Advisory Council and friends. Make sure your messages mean what you think they mean before you commit them to print in the form of a brochure or newspaper article.

**Take time to develop points** and fine-tune your messages. You will use these messages consistently. Be sure they present your lead agency, partners, services, funding sources, CASA and participating youth and families in the best light possible.

## Get Your Message Out

There are numerous ways to get your message out to audiences you hope to reach. Use all of them, if possible. If you do not have the capacity to launch a full-scale media campaign or strategy, focus on one or two goals that you know you will have success with.

**Identify and cultivate reporters** in your community who cover youth, education, criminal justice and related topics. Follow newspaper, television and radio coverage of the issues CASASTART addresses (youths and substance abuse, academic failure, delinquency, violence, peer pressure, the importance of mentors, etc). Check your library for media directories on who is covering these issues. The police department, school system and lead agency all have public affairs departments. Work with these partners to develop a press list.

**Develop and pitch compelling stories.** Look for stories that that provide new insight, are unpredictable or counterintuitive. Find stories of life-changing experiences to share with the media. Report on what's newsworthy rather than focusing on what's important to you professionally.

**Create and distribute materials,** such as a brochure, quarterly newsletter and flyers. Develop a steady stream of printed materials you can use to communicate with current audiences and cultivate new ones. Include copies of any press coverage and other awards or attention the program has received in all your correspondence to increase their impact and longevity.

**Generate good "word of mouth."** Members of your collaboration, your clients and their families are your best spokespeople for the program. Case managers, teachers, school principals, police officers, agency directors and other social service staff, youth and their families should be encouraged to share their experiences in the program. For instance, a teacher who has observed improvements in a child's behavior, a child who feels that she's on the right track, a parent who feels comfortable going to work knowing her child is safe—all of these "spokespeople" tell the story of how CASASTART is changing lives. These individuals can get the messages out by sharing their experiences with reporters, in community presentations and with friends and neighbors.

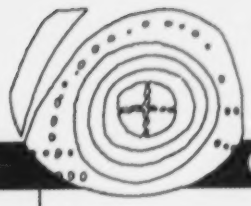
**Use community forums** to present your messages to new audiences. Religious events, parent-teacher organization meetings, board meetings of collaboration agencies and staff meetings of local businesses provide a perfect opportunity to bring the message of CASASTART to new audiences. This is a great way to build relationships with local civic organizations and a great forum for making your needs—for equipment, training, tutors and mentors— known to the community.

**Establish your CASASTART collaboration** as a recognized leader in youth development. Take advantage of opportunities to testify in municipal government hearings on substance abuse, education and other youth development issues. Write op-ed pieces and letters to the editor, and establish your identity as an expert on issues that are important to youth and communities.

**Cultivate name recognition** for CASASTART and your lead agency, school and police department. People enjoy seeing their names and the names of individuals and agencies they have come to trust in the newspaper, on television or in just about any positive context. Refer to the lead agency, core partners and the CASASTART program consistently in your materials and when speaking with the press. Audiences will come to recognize CASASTART and these entities as synonymous with positive youth development.

## TIPS for generating additional resources:

- ✔ **Ask for in-kind contributions.** Let partners and Advisory Council members know what you need in terms of office space, equipment and furniture. You can drastically reduce operating costs by seeking opportunities to share office space and to inherit computers and furniture from businesses that are not using these items or doing renovation.
- ✔ **Minimize training costs.** Local fire and police departments, utility companies, hospitals, airports and army reserve bases regularly conduct training sessions in crisis management, communications and prioritization of systems and procedures. Coordinate your staff's participation in training sessions held by these organizations to reduce costs and establish relationships with these local civic groups.
- ✔ **Minimize staff costs** by partnering with local high schools, colleges and universities. Structure internships, apprenticeships and assistant positions that can be filled by young people who are starting out in business and administration, public health, communications, social work, journalism, child development and education.



## Community Foundation

The Rose Community Foundation is concerned about lack of youth development programming in the Denver area. I am a senior program officer for grant making in the health area and responsible for distributing about three million in grants to the six-county, metro Denver area. The grants I oversee advance three priorities: primary prevention, access to care and health policy, and public health leadership development.

We have four grant making areas besides health, so I have four counterparts who do this work with me. The common concern for all of us is youth development. We understand CASASTART as substance abuse prevention with a youth development approach, so that's why we're involved. We fund the CASASTART site in Denver at Lake Middle School.

One of our approaches is obviously to leverage as many sources of funding in these areas as we can. At around the same time we had begun talking with CASA about youth development and substance abuse prevention, we were focusing on child development as well. We figured that, rather than have organizations fighting over a limited number of resources, we would have them come together to create a joint public policy strategy. Getting individual agencies to come together to obtain funding for the whole community increases the pie.

We structured the partnership so that they could apply for federal funding that comes through the Department of Health and Human Services. The site we fund is also funded by federal and state dollars. We pay for CASA's involvement and technical assistance, while the federal funds pay for direct services and case management. We've also brought specific foundations together to hear about CASASTART. As a result, Colorado Trust has made a grant to start a site in Adams County, which is contiguous to this county.

One of the challenges we face in developing long term sources of financing for any good, evaluated program, is helping the program directors and executive directors interface with the world of public policy. You need people at the local level who recognize those leverage points for obtaining funding and are opportunistic about pursuing them. That's what we've tried to be for CASASTART—not out front trying to get credit, not advancing a particular program or organization, but helping them to develop a common agenda without the turf war.

The next challenge is to figure out how to advance your strategy and pursue public policy in that arena. As a foundation, we have a lot of credibility to do this work because we don't have a turf to defend. People assume objectivity. You do well to find people who will bridge that gap for you by maintaining the integrity of your goal and also remaining observant to political realities of any given community. Build in communication lines across those arenas so that each individual knows what the other is doing and has the flexibility to do well what they know how to do well. After that, you can let go of it—let the people in public policy work with it.

■ *Annie Van Dusen, Senior Program Officer*
**The Rose Community Foundation** Denver, Colorado

THE DENVER POST

*Voice of the Rocky Mountain Empire*

The following article provides an excellent sample of the kind of coverage that will help to sustain your program by bringing attention to your success in producing positive outcomes in the lives of youth and families.

# Anti-drug focus goes one-on-one

## Experiment aids Denver kids

By Carol Krack
Denver Post Staff Writer

The eyes of the country are on Lake Middle School.

There, and at 17 other sites in the United States, school leaders are testing a drug-prevention program for the most challenging kids that works by 'killing them with kindness.'

The program is called CASASTART for short, standing for Striving Together to Achieve Rewarding Tomorrows, a program of the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA).

While the program is still experimental, supporters say they have seen some remarkable results.

Destiny Gonzales, 13, said that turmoil in her family last year led to truancy. "The reason I wasn't coming to school is my grandma died, and she was like my mom. I lived with her and my grandpa since I was a little girl.

"Shelley, my (CASASTART) lady, she talked to my grandpa. She's the one who encouraged me to come to school."

Like the better-known DARE program, which has largely fallen out of favor, CASASTART's goal is to keep kids away from drugs. But instead of focusing on sending a broad anti-drug message to an entire student body, CASASTART workers focus on individual students. The goal is to find out what problems confront a student and then try to eliminate them — whether that means getting a crack house off the block, tutoring, or drug rehab for Mom. When a CASASTART kid has to go to court, an advocate goes along.

"It works one-on-one to lead them in a different direction, as opposed to having a general (anti-drug) education program," said Shirley Farnsworth, director of community education with Denver Public Schools.

In the case of Destiny, she is back in school and looking forward to high school and a career in nursing. She plans to attend John F. Kennedy High School instead of her neighborhood school, West, because "If I go to West, my mind won't be on school, it will be on my friends."

Teachers or administrators nominate students for Lake's CASASTART program, where they are hooked up with one of three advocates trained in social work and hired specially for CASASTART. Advocates average 15 students each.

Lake counselor Richard Marin said he has seen the advocates take on kids suspended for defi-

# Pilot program aids kids

The Denver Post / John Prieto

**Lake Middle School student Erica Reyes, 14, standing, chats with some of the adults involved in after-school programs, seated from left: Symantha Rudolph, Billy Hufford and Alana James.**

ance of authority and suspended for ditching school. The advocates, he said, "are turning them around."

Larry Murray, a fellow of the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University who oversees all CASASTART programs, said interest has been keen nationally, especially as it shows results.

"This program is designed to wrap around a kid's life," he said. The idea is, "to be there when the child needs help, not only when we have something to tell them."

Though CASASTART is still experimental, researchers at the Urban Institute in Washington, D.C., and at the Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence at the University of Colorado-Boulder say there are signs it works.

After two years in CASASTART pilots launched in 1993 in Austin, Texas, Savannah, Ga., and Bridgeport, Conn., researchers found students were using and selling less drugs, participating in less violent crime, making better friends and were more likely to pass to the next grade level, compared with youth outside the program.

And though results aren't supposed to kick in until the students' second year of participation, measures of student achievement at Lake started climbing sooner than that, said Alana James, Colorado CASASTART consultant.

Three-fourths of the CASASTART kids at Lake improved attendance and their grades, CASASTART advocate Brigid McRaith said.

James is in the midst of launching a second program in Commerce City using money from the Colorado Trust, the Rose Community Foundation, the state's Colorado Kids Ignore Drugs substance-abuse prevention program and the Annie Casey Foundation.

CASASTART will only go into schools that already have strong after-school and summer programs. Lake's after-school program is part of the Beacon Neighborhood Center and the school already had a community policing program, which also is crucial to CASASTART.

"As a neighborhood-based program, we don't think you can change people outside the context in which they live," Murray said. "Young people living in a crime-ridden, drug hot spots feel unsafe. If they don't view police as helpers in their lives, it's not likely they'll change behaviors."

With Dennis Staff, the only Denver police officer assigned full-time to a DPS middle school, the kids at Lake "know at least one cool cop," McRaith said.

And the CASASTART counselors have quick access to an officer when they spot a problem that police can help with, like a new crack house on a student's block or walk to school.

"If we identify a problem house, I will find out about the house, see if the police have been called," Staff said. Sometimes, if the house is on a corridor children use to and from school, "we reroute kids."

Staff was on patrol for 21 years before he asked for a full-time assignment at Lake, where he's worked nine years.

"We were getting a call (from Lake) every 15 minutes," he said. The move made sense and he doesn't regret it.

"This is the greatest job I've ever had, bar none. I enjoy the freedom, I enjoy the fact I started this program. I like the kids. Every day is a different day."

Staff is also part of team that works with the school's employees to make sure they know what is going on in a student's life. In some cases students seen as the biggest troublemakers are quite bright, Murray said.

Fourteen-year-old Gladys Corpus was on an academic slide. "Then Brigid started helping me with my homework — I was in sixth grade at the time."

Gladys repeated the sixth grade. She started seventh grade this fall, but soon moved to the eighth grade and caught up with her peers. "Seventh grade was too easy for me," she said. "My seventh-grade test scores were high and the (eighth grade) is better because it's, like, harder."

CASASTART staff use Gladys' bilingual skills to translate the program to Spanish speakers. Now she wants to be a professional translator; Italian will be her third language.

Parent Marlene Garcia said her daughter started with CASASTART at the beginning of the school year when "she didn't care about anything, she was real closed up. She has a couple of sisters and they fight. Her self-esteem was real low, her grades were failing.

"I have really seen a change in her attitude."

◀ **Note** how the story briefly describes the goals of CASASTART and how the program works. The piece weaves in personal experiences of program staff and participating youth to tell the story of how CASASTART is changing lives. By featuring a spokesperson from CASA, the article makes the important link between a local substance abuse prevention program and a nationally recognized research organization committed to eliminating substance abuse and addiction in our society.

**An article like this does not happen by accident or good fortune.** It is the result of a lot of coordination and effective communication between the reporter and CASASTART staff assigned to handle media relations. At least one person on your staff must be prepared to answer questions, send materials, arrange interviews with spokespeople, provide additional names and contacts of people who may be helpful and follow up with everyone involved to make sure these connections are being made successfully.

The rewards of this investment will be felt long after initial publication of the article. A piece like this goes a long way to attracting the attention and securing buy-in from major funding sources, potential partners and influential people in the field of youth development for months and even years to come.

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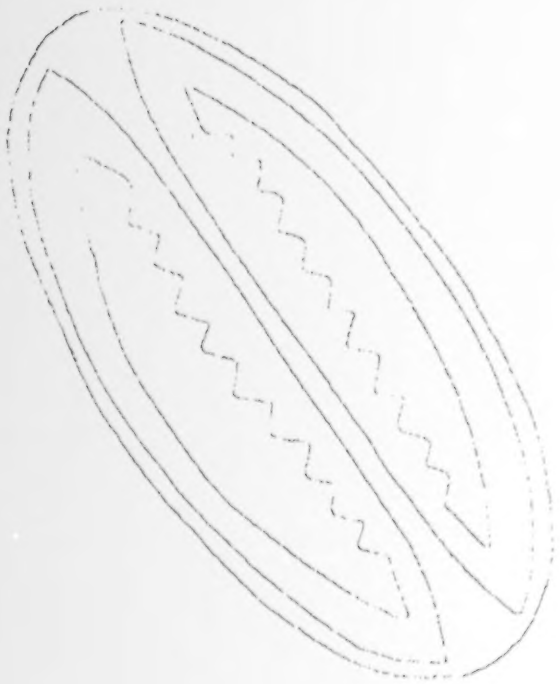

# Resources & References

# RESOURCES AND REFERENCES

## CASASTART Site Profiles

CASASTART is currently serving hundreds of high risk youth, their families and communities in cities across the country. The numbers of CASASTART sites and youth served continue to grow.

### Colorado

**Target community:** Adams County and Commerce City (2000 – present)

Lead Agency: Adams Community Mental Health Center

School: Adams Middle School and Alsup Elementary Schools

Police: Adams County Sheriff's Department and Commerce City Police Department

**Target community:** West Denver (1999 – present)

Lead Agency: Mi Casa Resource Center for Women

School: Lake Middle School

Police: District One of the Denver Police Department

### California

**Target community:** Crenshaw Corridor, Los Angeles (1996 – 2000)

Lead Agency: Youth Intervention Program, Inc.

School: Audobon Intermediate School

Police: Southwest Division of the Los Angeles Police Department

**Target community:** Echo Park/Westlake, Los Angeles (1996 – present)

Lead Agency: El Centro Del Pueblo

School: Logan Street Elementary and King Middle Schools

Police: Northeast and Rampart Divisions of the Los Angeles Police Department

## New York

| | |
|---|---|
| **Target community:** | Washington Heights, New York City (1996 – present) |
| Lead Agency: | Alianza Dominicana, Inc. |
| School: | Intermediate School 143 |
| Police: | 33rd and 34th Precincts of the New York City Police Department |

## Pennsylvania

| | |
|---|---|
| **Target community:** | North Philadelphia (1996 – present) |
| Lead Agency: | Congreso de Latinos Unidos, Inc. |
| School: | Julia DeBurgos Bilingual Middle Magnet School |
| Police: | Philadelphia's 25th Police District |
| **Target Community:** | Frankford Cluster (2000-present) |
| Lead Agency: | Frankford Family Development Center |
| School: | Warren G. Harding Middle School |
| Police: | Philadelphia's 15th Police District |
| **Target Community:** | Lincoln Cluster (2000-present) |
| Lead Agency: | Lincoln Family Center |
| School: | Meehan Middle School |
| Police: | Philadelphia's 15th Police District |
| **Target Community:** | West Cluster (2000-present) |
| Lead Agency: | Youth Services, Incorporated |
| School: | Sayre Middle School |
| Police: | Philadelphia's 18th Police District |
| **Target Community:** | Washington Cluster (2000-present) |
| Lead Agency: | Nationality Services Center |
| School: | Rush Middle School |
| Police: | Philadelphia's 8th Police District |

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## Texas

**Target community:** South San Antonio (1999 – present)

Lead Agency: San Antonio Department of Community Initiative

School: Dwight Middle School and Athens Elementary School

Police: San Antonio and South San Antonio Independent School District Police Departments and West Precinct

**Target Community:** Edgewood (2000-present)

Lead Agency: Department for Community Initiatives

School: H.K. Williamson Elementary and Gus Garcia Junior High School

Police: San Antonio Police Department/ San Antonio Fear Free Environment (SAFFE)

**Target community:** La Montana Vista (2000 – present)

Lead Agency: Central DeSalud Familiar La Fe

School: East Montana Middle School

Police: El Paso County Sheriff's Department

## Washington DC

**Target community:** District of Columbia (2001 – present)

Lead Agency: Life Stride, Inc.

Lead Agency: The Perry School Community Services Center

Lead Agency: Far Southeast Family Strengthening Collaborative

School: District of Columbia Public Schools

Police: Metropolitan Police Department

As of May 2001

Additional communities that have participated in the program since its inception in 1992 include:
Austin, Texas;
Bridgeport, Connecticut;
Memphis, Tennessee;
Newark, New Jersey;
Savannah, Georgia;
Seattle, Washington;
Tampa, Florida.

Several of the demonstration sites have continued the program using local funds.

## CASASTART Sites

As of May 2001

## FORMS AND TEMPLATES

Use the following descriptions and samples of CASASTART forms and templates to create your own. Forms are based on those created and used at CASASTART sites across the country.

1. CASASTART budget model
2. Case conference review
3. Case file—contents
4. Confidentiality agreement among case conference participants
5. Discharge summary
6. Incentive plan qualifications for participating youth
7. Informed consent waiver—request for information and/or authorization for release of confidential information about participating youth
8. Individualized service plan/action plan
9. Monitoring form
10. Permission to participate—for parent/guardian to sign on behalf of child
11. Progress report—to be completed by participating youth's teacher
12. Referral form for child to join CASASTART
13. Statement about rights of participating youth—for parent/guardian
14. Child intake and assessment questionnaire—*see page 29 for full text*
15. Child's personal commitment to CASASTART—*see page 34 for full text*
16. Family intake and assessment questionnaire—*see page 37 for full text*
17. Interagency agreement—*see page 19 for full text*


CASASTART Field Guide © CASA 2001.

## 1 CASASTART BUDGET MODEL

| Category and Line-Item | Annual Salary for CASASTART | Time on Project (Hours Per Week) | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **A. Personnel—Position Title** | | | |
| Project Manager | $ 9,000 | 25% (10) | |
| Case Manager | $ 29,000 | 100% (40) | |
| Case Manager | $ 29,000 | 100% (40) | |
| Case Manager | $ 29,000 | 100% (40) | |
| Project Assistant | $ 10,500 | 50% (20) | |
| Director of Youth Programs | $ 3,000 | 10% (4) | |
| | Subtotal Personnel | | $ 109,000 |
| | Fringe Benefits (20%) | | $ 21,900 |
| | **Total Personnel** | | **$130,900** |
| **B. Consultants** | | | |
| Advisory Council | | | $ 4,480 |
| | **Total Consultants** | | **$ 4,480** |
| **C. Travel** | | | |
| In-service area travel | | | $ 930 |
| Out-of-service area travel | | | $ 2,500 |
| | **Total Travel** | | **$ 3,430** |
| **D. Operating Expense** | | | |
| Facility use | | | $ 23,360 |
| Training | | | $ 2,125 |
| Supplies | | | $ 950 |
| Postage | | | $ 750 |
| Communication | | | $ 3,540 |
| Client transportation | | | $ 1,000 |
| Client incentive | | | $ 2,500 |
| Insurance | | | $ 1,000 |
| Indirect | | | $ 24,101 |
| | **Total Operating Expense** | | **$ 59, 326** |
| **E. Total Program Cost** | | | **$198,136** |

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## 2 CASE CONFERENCE REVIEW

1. Include name of participating youth and case manager.
2. List names of all other participants, as well as guests from other agencies and family members.
3. Include date of last case conference.
4. Confirm whether follow-up from last meeting was completed.
5. Discussion notes should include school update, family update, case manager update and review of services provided.
6. Follow-up notes should include specific tasks or goals to be completed, by whom, when and how.
7. Include line for case manager's supervisor to sign and date.

## 3 CASE FILE—CONTENTS

1. Participant data form
2. Participant rights
3. Release of information
4. Risk assessment
5. Summary
6. Service plan
7. CASASTART intake and assessment form (baseline assessment)
8. Medical information form
9. Transportation release (authorization to transport a child in a company vehicle)
10. Miscellaneous forms (report card, progress report, referral form)
11. Agency referral form
12. File notes
13. Case manager signature and date

## 4 CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT AMONG CASE CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS

*[Sample text:]*

As a member of the CASASTART Case Conference Review Team, I have read and understand the statement of confidentiality agreed to by the client (participating youth and family). I understand that confidentiality provisions:

- Prevent the improper dissemination of information about children and families that might increase the likelihood of discrimination against them or of personal embarrassment.
- Protect personal security.
- Protect families.
- Protect job security.
- Reduce the likelihood of prejudice and differential treatment.
- Encourage individuals to make use of services designed to help them.

I also understand that sharing information is necessary and valuable, and that it allows CASASTART staff to:

- Conduct comprehensive assessments of youth and families' needs.
- Provide necessary services to clients.
- Coordinate service plans and avoid duplication of services.
- Facilitate the monitoring of services to ensure that needed services are being provided and that agencies receive proper reimbursement.
- Make services more family focused.
- Serve the needs of the broader community.
- Promote public safety.

I will use this information for designated purposes only. I will not disclose the information to any other person or agency unless I am specifically authorized to do so.

*[Each case conference participant must sign, list their agency affiliation and date.]*

_____

*Name, Affiliation, Date*

_____

*Name, Affiliation, Date*

_____

*Name, Affiliation, Date*

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## 5 DISCHARGE SUMMARY

1. Include date opened, date closed, name of participant, date of birth, name of parent/guardian and contact information.
2. Identify reason for closing the case. For example:
   - Fulfilled two-year term for participation
   - Moved out of service area
   - Permanently suspended from school
   - Unable to reach via phone, mail and home visits
   - Participant requested that case be closed
3. Confirm whether family and participant have been informed that the case is closed.
4. Include notes on participant's progress toward goals.
5. Include notes on family's overall progress toward goals.
6. Include resources or referral sources given to the family for future needs and, if relevant, the name of another agency who will be taking over this case.
7. Include signature of case manager and case manager's supervisor, and date of discharge.

## 6 INCENTIVE PLAN QUALIFICATIONS FOR PARTICIPATING YOUTH—created by CASASTART staff in Denver.

*[Sample text:]*

1. Attends all (or most) activities (this may include mentoring and tutoring sessions, recreational activities and special events).
2. Shows up on time for one-one-one meetings with case manager.
3. Shows respect for CASASTART program participants and staff.
4. Shows respect for self.
5. Earns an A or B in a class during a six-week period.
6. Earns near-perfect attendance (two or less absences in a six-week period).
7. Receives four or less lateness reports ("tardies") in a six-week period.
8. Receives two or less detention referrals in a six-week period.
9. Receives no suspensions.
10. Teachers' reports show homework completed frequently.
11. Teachers' reports show behavior problems infrequent.
12. Teachers' progress reports show that participant was patient toward peers and adults.



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## 7 INFORMED CONSENT WAIVER—

Request for Information and/or Authorization for Release of Confidential Information About Participating Youth

*[Sample text:]*

I hereby authorize the disclosure of information among the agencies and individuals checked below from the records of [name or identification code assigned to participant and date of birth].

*[List partner agencies and individuals who will have access to and/or use of information.]*

This authorization is effective immediately and is subject to revocation in writing at any time, except to the extent that the action has already been taken in reliance thereon. This authorization expires thirty days after the case has been terminated.

It is understood that the policy of [lead agency] is to release only that information about a client or former client, which in the judgement of the staff, is considered essential to the purposes for which the authorization is requested. This in no way binds [lead agency] to open its records for inspection, or to otherwise provide information which may violate the above policy. It is further understood that [lead agency] may refuse in writing to disclose portions of the case record that are believed to be injurious to the welfare of the client or former client.

I further release my case manager, the agency, and the individuals listed above from any liability arising from the release of information related to my case.

_____

*[signature of parent or guardian and date]*

_____

*[signature of witness and date]*

_____

*[signature of case manager and date]*

## 8 INDIVIDUALIZED SERVICE PLAN/ACTION PLAN

1. Include participating youth's name, date for next review, case manager's name and date.
2. Include assessment of participating youth's problems, strengths and desires.
3. Identify long term goals agreed to by youth—personal, school, family.
4. Identify short term goals agreed to by youth—personal, school, family.
5. Identify services and supports necessary to achieving goals.
6. Record outcomes and evaluate progress.


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## MONITORING FORM 9

*[Example from San Antonio Casastart Site]*

*[Insert Lead Agency Name]*

PARTICIPANT SERVICES LOG

Participant name _____ Participant number _____

| Date | Element | Type | Time Spent | Summary |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

## 10 PERMISSION TO PARTICIPATE— FOR PARENT/GUARDIAN TO SIGN ON BEHALF OF CHILD

*[Sample text:]*

I *[name of parent/guardian]* give my permission for *[name of child]* to participate in the CASASTART program. I have read and understand information about how the program works. I have read and understand my rights and responsibilities as a parent/guardian of the participating child.

_____

*[signature of parent/guardian, relationship to child, date, contact information]*

_____

*[emergency contact information]*

## 11 PROGRESS REPORT— TO BE COMPLETED BY PARTICIPATING YOUTH'S TEACHER

1. Include participating youth's name, teacher's name and class/subject.
2. Include instructions for returning the form to the appropriate person by a certain date.

*[Sample text:]*

Please circle the most appropriate response:

How often does the CASASTART participant complete his or her homework?

Always Frequently Sometimes Never

How often does the CASASTART participant show behavior problems?

Always Frequently Sometimes Never

How much patience does the CASASTART participant show toward his or her peers and adults?

A lot Some A Little None

What is the CASASTART participant's estimated grade for this class at this time? _____

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

*[signature of teacher and date]*

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# 12 REFERRAL FORM FOR CHILD TO JOIN CASASTART

*[Sample text:]*

CASASTART is a substance abuse prevention program and collaboration that brings [lead agency], [school], [police department] together to reduce drug-related crime in [target community] and foster healthy development among high risk youth.

1. Include information about person referring: name, agency affiliation/title and contact information.
2. Include child's name, date of birth, age, grade, primary language spoken, name of parent/guardian and contact information.
3. Describe briefly the strengths of the child.
4. Describe briefly reasons for referral.
5. Describe briefly utilized intervention and results.
6. Include eligibility criteria with instructions: "Circle/check all that apply."
7. Confirm whether family was notified of referral.
8. Include instructions for returning form to the appropriate person.
9. Send referral forms to school, social service and law enforcement personnel.

# 13 STATEMENT ABOUT RIGHTS OF PARTICIPATING YOUTH—FOR PARENT/GUARDIAN

*[Sample text:]*

As a participant of the CASASTART program, you and your child have the right to:

- Receive case management services.
- Be advised about the agency's case management process, techniques and instruments.
- Decline to participate in the activities outlined in the agency's service plan.
- Inspect your own and your child's service record.
- Privacy. Information gained during the case management process is confidential and not subject to release without your prior written consent. However, you are required to read and understand the following limitations to this confidentiality:

  1. If you report that you have abused or neglected your child, or if we suspect such abuse or neglect, we are required by law to notify the appropriate authorities.
  2. If your child reports that he or she has abused other children, we are required by law to notify the appropriate authorities.
  3. If you or your child threatens to hurt someone else, we will warn the person in danger and report the possible danger to the police.
  4. If you or your child threatens to harm yourself, we will notify the appropriate authorities for further evaluation.
  5. The courts can obtain your child's service record with a court order.
  6. Unless parental rights have been terminated, ex-spouses have the right to review their child's service record.

I understand the information contained in this informed consent agreement and give permission to the CASASTART program to evaluate and develop a service plan for my child. I further understand that success of the service plan is based on active participation on behalf of my child and myself.

_____

*[signature of parent or guardian and date]*

_____

*[signature of witness and date]*

_____

*[signature of case manager and date]*

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## Appendix A

### Fund Development Web Sites

**www.cfda.gov** – Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance

**www.cadca.org** – Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America

**www.ed.gov** – Department of Education

**www.fdncenter.org** – Foundation Center

**www.fconline.fdncenter.org** – Foundation Center Online

**www.jointogether.org** – Join Together

**www.nida.nih.gov** – National Health Institute on Drug Abuse

**www.NLM.NIH.gov** – National Institute of Health Resources

**www.health.org/nsawi/** – National Substance Abuse Web Index

**www.ojjdp.gov** – Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

**www.govspot.com** – State and Federal Government

**www.samhsa.gov** – Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

In addition, all states and most municipal governments have Web sites.

## Appendix B

### Current and Former CASASTART Funding Sources

Annie E. Casey Foundation

Health Plan Services

KMART Family Foundation

Mentor Foundation USA

Pacific Bell

Pew Charitable Trusts

Ronald McDonald Children's Charities

Rose Community Foundation

The American Express Foundation

The California Endowment

The Colorado Trust

The Department of Justice

The Ford Foundation

The Independence Foundation

The New York Community Trust

The Prudential Foundation

The Rockefeller Foundation

The Simon Foundation

United Technologies

The State of Colorado

The City of San Antonio

The City of Philadelphia

The County of El Paso

The District of Columbia

As of May 2001.

The National Center on
Addiction and Substance Abuse
at Columbia University

633 Third Avenue
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